THE  TIMES



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Inquiry tackles clothes and computers

Traders who overcharge to be fined

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

A NATIONWIDE assault on high prices was promised by the Government yesterday as part of a package to boost competition and enterprise.

The Trade Secretary is taking new powers to tackle retailers and utility companies who charge more for their goods than their counterparts do overseas, and companies face heavy fines if they breach anti-competitive rules.

Computers, electrical goods, designer clothes and watches are among goods that will be examined — as will electricity standing charges, which can add up to 20 per cent of bills. Cars, supermarkets and private medicine are already under investigation.

The results will be made public with the Department of Trade and Industry "naming and shaming" goods that cost much more here than abroad.

Stephen Byers will then call on his powers, which no previous Trade Secretary has used, to ask the Director-General of Fair Trading John Bridgeman to investigate specific prices.

Under the Competition Act, companies can be fined up up to 10 per cent of their UK turnover if they are found to have engaged in anti-competitive practices and failed to remedy them.

Announcing his plans to the Commons, Mr Byers said that there was widespread concern that customers in Britain had to pay more than people in other countries for similar goods.

He was also asking the energy regulator to investigate widely varying standing charges imposed by electricity companies. These account for 13 per cent of a typical bill, but can reach 20 per cent for low users. The results of the investigation would be taken into account the next time electricity prices were negotiated, and he wanted the regulator to ensure that the poor and elderly were not being disadvantaged.

Mortgage companies, too, would have to give clearer information on charges, fees and rates so that it would be easier for borrowers to make a choice and calculate how much their home loan would really cost.

But John Redwood, the Shadow Trade Secretary, complained that it had taken the



"Look on the bright side — coconuts are a lot cheaper here than in Britain"

Government two years to realise the importance of bringing down prices. He described the international study as a "poor man's *Which?* to tell us how much we are suffering."

There was no evidence that the Government was the "customers' friend", he said, and Gordon Brown had pushed up prices by raising duty on petrol.

He told Mr Byers: "I do hope that, when drawing up his list of sinners that need referral for high pricing, he will refer the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He is the main offender when it comes to petrol and diesel prices.

"He is the main offender when it comes to the haulage industry, and I hope he will take responsibility for the problems the motorist is now experiencing."

Mr Redwood claimed it had taken the Government two years to realise prices should be lower and monopolies broken. "The Conservatives broke monopolies and introduced competition on an industry by industry basis.

"The Government has spent two years talking about competition but has done nothing significant to further it. All it has done is it has put up business costs and put up business prices."

He said: "There is absolutely no evidence that this Government is the consumer's friend. They talk about being so, they spin that they are, but they funk the decisions necessary to actually bring the prices down."

Mr Byers also announced that he would be injecting 100 million of new money into the creation of small business service. The new service, to be headed by a high-profile chief executive, would offer advice on matters such as exports and payrolls, while acting a voice for small businesses in Whitehall.

INSIDE

Budget leaflet 'is hiding tax rises'

BY ROLAND WATSON, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

GORDON BROWN'S presentation of the Budget was last night referred to the public spending watchdog amid claims that the Chancellor was misleading millions of voters.

Francis Maude, the Shadow Chancellor, claimed that a leaflet explaining Budget measures for the public and produced with taxpayers' money amounted to "Labour Party propaganda".

He complained that it omitted to mention a series of tax rises and masked others with "half-truth" euphemisms.

Some 1.5 million copies of the document are to be distributed to libraries, Post Offices, schools and universities at a cost of £100,000. Mr Brown is seeking authority to send a similar leaflet to all 26 million British households next year.

But Mr Maude complained that the eight-page document, titled "Budget 99, building a stronger economic future for Britain", was a "completely one-sided account".

The new energy tax on businesses, to come in from 2001, is described as a "climate change levy". And those earning more than £26,000 a year — whose National Insurance contributions have been raised — are described as "paying a fairer share".

There is no mention of the scrapping of the 20p income tax band or the 0.5 per cent increase in stamp duty for house sales of more than £250,000.

The Shadow Chancellor has written to Sir John Bourn, the Comptroller and Auditor-General, asking if the leaflet is a proper use of public money.

He has also written to Sir Andrew Turnbull, Permanent Secretary at the Treasury, to ask if the leaflet is an accurate description of the Budget.

Mr Maude said: "This is the most dishonest Budget ever and this leaflet gives a completely misleading view of it. It reads like a Labour Party propaganda sheet [and] is full of half-truths."

A Treasury spokesman said the leaflet gave a phoneline and Internet address for those who wanted to find out more.

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PETER NICHOLLS

Adriana Vasile performing a leg hook on the Prince of Wales as they tangoed yesterday

First tango in Buenos Aires for Prince and the showgirl

FROM ALAN HAMILTON IN BUENOS AIRES

ARGENTINA does strange things to Princes of Wales. It must be the influence of hot Latin blood that loosens the strings of their tight northern European inhibitions.

At the height of a delicate mission to mend fences with our former adversary, Charles allowed himself to be lured onto a Buenos Aires dance floor to make a creditable attempt at that most blatantly sexual dance, the tango. It was a diplomatic masterstroke.

The Prince had just delivered a surprisingly pointed speech on the Falkland Islanders' right to self-determination at a banquet hosted by President Menem in the capital's grandest hotel, when the company moved to a side room to enjoy a cabaret performed by a popular local tango troupe.

Bold as brass, Adriana Vasile, a lissome member of the troupe, asked the Prince if he would care to tango; it does, after all, take two. "Will you teach me?" he asked with an enthusiasm undimmed by his lack of the obligatory black goucho hat. Señora Vasile was only too happy to oblige.

Dressed for the occasion in a shockingly but necessarily split skirt, she led the Prince through the *Ninth of July* and *Don Juan*. He was a little stiff; the dance and a lifetime of polo injuries do not sit naturally together. But he undoubtedly gave it his best, well aware that the cameras were on him. Enjoyment was written all over his face.

His teacher was generous in her praise, knowing that she was destined for instant celebrity. "He didn't know how to tango but he obviously knew how to dance," Señora Vasile said through an interpreter. "He was very relaxed and had a lot of energy. I was surprised, as he has the image of being a serious person. But he was a different person when we were dancing; he seems to forget protocol."

Suitably emboldened, the Prince then took to the floor with the President's exceedingly glamorous 28-year-old daughter Zulemita. Their terpsichorean efforts could not properly be described as a tango, but only because Zulemita's white evening dress, although daringly low cut at the top, was far too tight to permit the necessary leg abandon. It did not, however, prevent the Prince from kissing her.

The present Prince of Wales is not the first to let his hair down in Argentina, although he behaves with infinitely more propriety than the future Edward VIII, the last heir to the throne to visit the country.

Initially making a good impression, the former Prince's 1931 tour of Latin America began to sag as it progressed. The Chilean ambassador noted his extra-curricular activities: "Baccarat, roulette, double whisky sodas and ladies with pasts were his favourites."

By the time he reached Argentina the pace was beginning to tell. The biographer Philip Ziegler wrote: "He turned up at important functions two hours late, in the wrong dress and noticeably the worst for wear."

His successor may be a tyro at the tango, but he has a tendency to turn up on time, in the right clothes, and sober.

Falklands row, page 3

Rapist climbs jail wall

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

A RAPIST who bombarded his victim with threatening letters and set fire to her house escaped from prison yesterday, seven months after being made a "trusted" inmate.

Alan Crisp's victim and witnesses at his trial were given police protection last night as a row broke out over the decision to lower his security classification. Officers at Lincoln jail claimed their warnings had been disregarded, but the Prison Service said the governor had never heard from staff that they had such concerns.

As a result of the lower classification, Crisp was known as a "trusty" and was moved from the main part of the jail to a special unit. He fled from there by climbing out of a skylight and scaling a ladder lowered by accomplices into the prison grounds from the top of a 20ft high perimeter fence.

Crisp, 36, of Hucknall in Nottinghamshire, was serving eight and a half years for rape, arson and intimidation. After the rape, he poured petrol through his victim's letter box and set her house on fire. He also wrote threatening to "scar her pretty litte face".



Crisp: "trusty" status

University boxers do battle over the scales

BY JOHN GOODBODY
SPORTS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE Varsity boxing match began in chaos last night when a simmering dispute between Oxford and Cambridge nearly caused its cancellation.

The controversy, the biggest at either of the universities since the 1987 Oxford boat race mutiny, had been mounting for months since the two sides failed to agree on the timing of the weigh-in. Cambridge wanted a later start of 6pm instead of the traditional midday, but Oxford insisted that for health reasons it should take place earlier to give the boxers a chance to rehydrate and eat.

Last year the two sides took the same view. But Oxford, then the home team, had its way when Cambridge were informed that, since the event is recognised by the Amateur Boxing Association as an open tournament, "there is no requirement for the weigh-in to be in the evening, but can be determined by the promoting club — obviously this year that being Oxford."

This year Cambridge were the hosts and insisted on their right to choose the weigh-in time, but Oxford refused. Oxford have won the past 13 meetings, making the antagonism between the two univesities particularly intense.

The arguments continued last night at the Guildhall, Cambridge, where 800 had paid a total of £10,000 to watch the annual match. The ABA insted that there had to be a weigh-in with one of their officials present.

Oxford had arrived in Cambridge at lunchtime and had weighed in in front of the Cambridge University secretary. But this was not good enough for the ABA; it would have refused to sanction a match without proper weigh-ins.

The Dark Blues had spent the afternoon rehydrating and eating, and clearly their body weights were higher than their Cambridge counterparts.

Eventually, after 1¼ hours of bitter arguments, it was agreed that the match, which had never been cancelled before except in war-time in its 102-year history, would go ahead, but only within the approved weight bands of the ABA.

Both sides agreed that there would be eight contests, with Oxford forfeiting the lightweight category because their man, John Banks, was too heavy.

Pro-euro Conservatives win the game of the name

Rebels could steal European seats from Hague, writes James Landale


Stevens: protest party

WILLIAM HAGUE suffered a fresh blow yesterday when Conservative officials failed to prevent breakaway pro-European Tories from registering a new political party yesterday.

The new Registrar of Political Parties brushed aside Tory objections that the name of the Pro-Euro Conservative Party was too similar to that of the official Conservative Party.

The decision opens the way for the group to put up a comprehensive list of candidates for the European elections in June. If the party campaigns hard, it could win a handful of seats.

But more importantly, and more likely, it could steal enough Tory votes to reduce substantially the number of seats that William Hague is expecting to win.

The Pro-Euro Conservative Party was set up by two MEPs who defected from the Tories in January in protest at Mr Hague's opposition to the European single currency.

John Stevens, MEP for Thames Valley, said: "Conservatives who had thought their only options were to vote for Labour, the Liberal Democrats or stay at home, can now vote Conservative and in favour of the euro. We will do all we can to build up support for a nationwide campaign which pro-euro Conservatives can support."

Brendan Donnelly, who is Member of the European Parliament for Sussex South and Crawley, said: "Until now, the policies of William Hague have implied that Conservatives can only be anti-euro.

"Our successful registration proves that it is possible to be both a Conservative and in favour of the euro."

Several breakaway Labour parties have been registered under the rules created by the Registration of Political Parties Act.

The legislation was introduced to prevent confusion among electors after some candidates used party names almost identical to those of the mainstream parties.

Hugh Kerr, an MEP expelled from Labour last year after being banned for being too critical of election procedures, is standing for the Scottish Socialist Party.

Ken Coates, another MEP expelled from the Labour Party at the same time, is heading the new Alternative Labour List in the East Midlands region.

Forty-nine parties in all, including the ten with House of Commons seats, have so far been formally registered to fight for seats in this summer's elections to the Scottish parliament, the Welsh assembly and to the European Parliament.

Letters, page 23

Geldof makes millions from Planet 24 sale

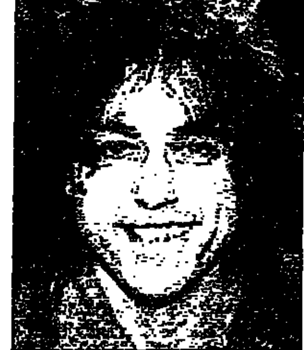
By Raymond Snoddy
Media Editor

BOB GELDOF and Lord Alli, the Labour peer, are expected to receive up to £6 million each from the sale of their Planet 24 television company to Carlton Communications. Charlie Parsons, the producer, who also owns a third of the company, will also benefit.

The deal means that one of the United Kingdom's most conservative media moguls, Michael Green, chairman of Carlton Communications, now owns one of the country's zaniest television companies. Planet 24 pioneered programmes such as *The Word* and *The Big Breakast*.

Carlton, one of Britain's largest commercial television companies, is believed to be making an immediate £10 million payment for Planet 24. The three equal shareholders can then receive up to another £8 million depending on how the independent production company performs in future.

Mr Geldof, who organised the Band Aid concerts to raise money to relieve famine in Ethiopia, said yesterday that now Planet 24 had been sold he "intended to pursue a career as an astrophysicist". In fact Mr Geldof, who last month completed a three-month stint presenting an evening radio programme on the London station Xfm, part of the Capital Group, is more likely to chase radio investments around Europe.


Geldof: a creator of innovative television

Lord Alli, who is particularly close to new Labour, will join the board of Carlton Television in April and will take on the new role of managing director of Carlton Productions. The enlarged division will include not just the existing Carlton Productions but also Planet 24 and Action Time, a Carlton production company specialising in game shows.

Together the Carlton production houses will be spending more than £200 million a year making programmes for all of Britain's broadcasters, including digital television.

In buying Planet 24, which also makes *Watercolour Challenge* for Channel 4 and *Gaytime TV* for the BBC, Mr Green, 50, is tapping into the youth market. Planet 24 has nurtured popular talent such as Chris Evans, Lily Savage, Mark Lamarr and Gaby Roslin.

Mr Green, who was closely associated with the Conservatives under Baroness Thatcher, is through Lord Alli buying himself access to the thinking of new Labour.

Lord Alli said yesterday that, with the backing of "the largest player in ITV and the UK's leading commercial international sales business outside the BBC, the opportunities are boundless".

Mr Geldof claimed yesterday that Planet 24 had managed to shift the way television looked so that screens were now awash with Plannet 24 "wannabe" programming.

Blair crony moves into the top slot at Carlton

By Carol Midgley
Media Correspondent

WHEN Lord Alli takes his seat on the board of Carlton Television next month, new Labour can congratulate itself that one of its most devoted cronies is working at the heart of a company once famed for its links with the Tory party.

As managing director of Carlton, the Labour peer will preside over more than £200 million of programming and become one of the most powerful men in television. His new position will make him even more valuable to Tony Blair, who uses the 34-year-old millionaire as his "hotline" to Britain's youth.

It was Waheed Alli who helped Mr Blair to woo young Britain during the election campaign, taking over the party political broadcasts and making them into slick mini-dramas starring Mr Blair.


Alli: known for smart dress and chauffeur

Lord Alli, who lives with his partner Charlie Parsons, was made the youngest life peer after the general election — a reward for his unstinting support and financial donations to New Labour.

He is a colourful, diminutive figure, famous for his immaculate three-piece suits and his Jaguar car driven by a traditional English chauffeur. His rise through the Establishment has been meteoric, particularly after the careers teacher at his South London comprehensive advised him to become a bus conductor.

In 1992 he met Mr Parsons, the highly creative force behind programmes such as *Network 7*, who had just teamed up with Bob Geldof at Planet 24 with the aim of pioneering the "laddish" programmes of the 1990s such as *The Big Breakfast* and *The Word*.

He and Mr Parsons became an item and are now one of the most fashionable couples in the country, the very symbols of new Britain.

Last year a party was staged at their Kent mansion for Mr Parsons's 40th birthday. There were peacocks on the lawn and dodgem cars and waltzers in the grounds with guests ranging from Peter Mandelson, one of Lord Alli's closest friends, to *EastEnders* actor Ross Kemp and Vanessa Feltz.

KIERAN DOHERTY

The King of Swaziland greeted by a guard of honour at the palace yesterday. There was less ceremony at the House

King of Swaziland amazed as two tribes go to war


MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Asked his view on Western civilisation, Mahatma Gandhi once replied: "I think it would be a good idea." The thought may have occurred to King Mswati III of Swaziland as he watched Prime Minister's Questions yesterday — amazed at the savagery.

His Majesty, on a visit to Britain, graced the Distinguished Strangers' Gallery in magnificent scarlet tunic and brocade. Swaziland is a small, safe, stable country in Southern Africa, its constitution a blend of tribal tradition with democracy. Ceremony there is colourful but decorous: nobody is insulted; nobody gets hurt.

How different from our own tribe. The Commons hit new heights of pantomime — or plumbed new depths of barbarism, depending upon whether you view the Chamber as a branch of theatre or of government.

At a luncheon in his honour the previous day at the Mansion House — and to the horror of the Lord Mayor — the King had risen to what sounded like an impromptu tirade in the Siswai language from an unknown guest in a brown leather coat. But this was Swazi etiquette: royal persons should rise to a babble of praise. His Majesty will therefore have been less surprised than many visitors to witness something similar when our Prime Minister rose. Everyone started screaming.

The Swazi King will also have recognised a custom now ritually observed in King Tony's court. Every Labour backbencher asking Blair a question prefaces it with an extravagant verbal grovel. This is getting sillier than the silliest days of the premiership of the Great She-Elephant (the *Indlovukazi* title which the Swazis accord to their Queen Mother and which Sir Julian Critchley once borrowed for his own Party Leader).

"Can I say how welcome is the boost for business ..." began Jonathan Shaw (Lab, Chatham & Aylesford). Could Phil Woolas (Lab) welcome the £15 million for schools in his constituency of Oldham E & Saddleworth? He could.

Was Blair "aware how warmly welcome in Scotland" was this week's Budget? He was, after Jim Murphy (Lab, Eastwood) had told him. Labour's Gareth Thomas ("while welcoming ... etc") had the cheek to mention a massive oil spill off his constituency of Clwyd W. Off message, Gareth: King Tony does not wish to receive bad news.

But these primitive traditions were routine by comparison with the War Dance. William Hague rose to wild ululation behind him. In a ritual chant he then asked the same question five times: would the Prime Minister say "what is the total tax rise, in pounds ..." this Government have overseen? To an answering cacophony from the Labour side, King Tony insisted, five times, that there was no rise, but a fall.

King Mswathi looked astonished. Each side plainly thought its chief was winning. But the clash of testimony was never resolved. Or rather it was resolved by a rant, of unprecedented violence, from King Tony about how good his tribe were, and how bad were the Tories.

Maybe the House should create a new ceremony? When statistical deadlock is reached, Madam Speaker should strike a traditional African skin drum (gift of Swaziland) and a figure of majestic authority in such matters, such as Peter Riddell, should be carried in by bearers to adjudicate. Happily I understand that Mr Riddell briefly lowers his bifocals to dispose of this clash, *en passant*, in his column in *The Times* this morning. I hope King Mswati sees it.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cardinal's offer on abortion

Roman Catholic women in Scotland who have had an abortion have been invited back to the Church for a "fast-track" to absolution. Cardinal Thomas Winning, leader of Scotland's Catholics, used a speech to mark the second anniversary of his controversial "cash for babies" programme to remind women that they could "make peace with God and their unborn child".

His offer on Tuesday night was extended to women who have had abortions, doctors and nurses who have peformed the procedures, and relatives who have counselled for abortions.

He has told priests in the Archdiocese of Glasgow that they no longer needed to refer to the bishop to give absolution to a woman who had had an abortion and sought forgiveness through confession.

Three men held

Three men were being questioned about the murder of Michael Menson, a 30-year-old black musician found in a North London house suffering from burns. The men were arrested in the Edmonton area and were being held by the Yard's new racial and violent crime task force.

Doping charges

Five men including a professional gambler were charged after a Scotland Yard investigation with conspiracy to defraud bookmakers by doping horses to reduce their performance during March 1997. They will appear at Bow Street Magistrates' Court in April.

Racing, page 45

Party planner

Allied Domecq, the brewer, has announced plans for the millennium celebrations, which include having all its 2,000 managed outlets and 1,500 leased pubs open, selling drinks at normal prices and not charging for admission. Staff will be paid triple time and a share of takings.

McDonald move

The Channel 4 presenter Sheena McDonald is to be moved out of intensive care at University College Hospital London and into a rehabilitation centre to aid her recovery after being hit by a police van answering a 999 call. The 44-year-old suffered serious head injuries in the accident.

Guinness death

A member of the Guinness family died when she was thrown from her Romany caravan, an inquest was told. Rose Nugent, 31, niece of the late Lady Henrietta Guinness, struggled to regain control when the horse bolted near the family estate in Berkshire. Verdict: accidental death.

Maude breached anti-sleaze rules

By Mark Inglefield
Political Reporter

FRANCIS MAUDE, the Shadow Chancellor, was found to have broken the House of Commons anti-sleaze rules yesterday after an inquiry by the Parliamentary Committee on Standards and Privileges.

He had been reported to the committee for failing to declare an interest in a debate he helped to initiate to oppose government plans to replace PEPs with individual savings accounts. Mr Maude is a director of the fund managers Gartmore Shared Equity Trust.

He was also reported for adding his name to a Tory amendment to a finance Bill affecting tax on retail shops. It was claimed that he should have declared this as he receives £25,000 as a director of the supermarket chain Asda.

But although the standards committee found that Mr Maude had fallen "foul of the rules", it claimed that this had been "unintentional" as his name had been added to the debate by another Tory MP.

Elizabeth Filkin, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, ruled that Mr Maude should have declared his interest in Gartmore because of its links with a firm which was involved in selling personal finance products.

But, she said, both breaches had arisen from the practice by the major parties of automatically adding the names of their frontbench spokesmen, in Government and Opposition, to relevant motions and amendments.

Ms Filkin suggested that, in future, party whips should check their spokesmen's personal financial interests before adding their names.

Condon unease at racism curbs

By Stewart Tendler
Crime Correspondent

SIR PAUL CONDON yesterday dismissed two of the principal legal reforms proposed by the Stephen Lawrence inquiry and cast doubt on the third. The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police told MPs that the proposals for a law against racist language and behaviour in private would be unworkable.

Any legislation would go against the spirit of the European Convention on Human Rights, and Britain was moving away from this type of law, he said while giving evidence to the Commons Select Committee on Home Affairs. He expected that the idea would be explored and then rejected as impractical.

Sir Paul said he was also "troubled" by the suggestion from Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, the inquiry chairman, that courts should abandon the legal principle that defendants cannot be re-tried on a charge for which they have been acquitted, even if there is new evidence. "It seems to be going in the opposite direction from the sorts of protection we have sought around suspects."

Asked about proposals to bring the police within the scope of the Commission for Racial Equality, he said he would not resist the change, which is supported by the Government, but would point out some difficulties.

Sir Paul condemned the inquiry's accidental release of details of police informants, saying that it had given police an enormous amount of work.

Civil servant stopped 40 times

By Stewart Tendler
Crime Correspondent

A SENIOR black civil servant who advises ministers on race relations has been halted by police under stop and search powers more than 40 times, MPs were told yesterday.

The case of Trevor Hall was raised yesterday with Sir Paul Condon, commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, as he gave evidence to the Commons select committee on home affairs on issues including police abuse of stop and search powers against black people.

In 17 years Mr Hall, now in his 50s, has been stopped on 44 occasions, 39 of which were by officers in London. His experience was once highlighted by a High Court judge during a lecture on race relations as an example of the racism and ignorance within the criminal justice system. Mr Hall, a member of the Home Office's community relations unit, acts as a consultant giving specialist advice on community and race relations policy and training covering the police as well as the Home Office, the prisons and probation service.

Yesterday the Home Office said that some of the stops were part of police operations round the City of London during terrorist alerts and all drivers were affected.

Asked about Mr Hall, who acted as a go-between for the Lawrence family and the commissioner earlier this year, Sir Paul said he had met him several times but he made no comment about the number of times the civil servant has been stopped.


Grenfell: food for thought

Prince sparks Falklands furore

Backing for self-determination upsets his Argentinian hosts, reports Alan Hamilton

THE Vice-President of Argentina accused the Prince of Wales of making "intolerable" comments about the Falkland islanders' right to self-determination yesterday. Carlos Ruckauf, in an interview with local radio, said: "The islanders have no right to self-determination, as the Prince suggested in a typically British trap."

Some Argentinians were incensed by the Prince's reference to the Falkland Islands in a speech to an official banquet hosted by President Menem in Buenos Aires on Tuesday night. He said: "My hope is that the people of modern, democratic Argentina, with their passionate attachment to their national traditions, will in the future be able to live amicably alongside the people of another modern, if rather smaller, democracy lying a few hundred miles off your coast — a people just as passionately attached to their traditions — and be able to do so in a spirit of mutual understanding and respect, so that neither will again need to feel any fear from, or hostility towards, the other.

"Such an understanding can only reinforce our own friendship. Today, so many old friendships between us are being rebuilt." He concluded by toasting the Argentine nation in Spanish and received warm applause.

But as the Prince spoke, 200 anti-British demonstrators, some with banners proclaiming "Pirate Prince Go Home", battled with heavily armed police on the streets near by and burned the Union flag.

Seňor Ruckauf belongs to a different faction of the Peronist Party to Seňor Menem, and is frequently at odds with him. Last night, Guido di Tella, the Foreign Minister, issued a statement in an attempt to defuse the controversy. He said the message, delivered on the first day of the Prince's official visit, was directed chiefly at the islanders and not at Argentina.

The Prince had asked that Argentina respect a small democracy a few hundred miles off its shores. "Not only does the Argentine constitution offer guarantees that should make their worries unwarranted, they are also given by Argentina's international behaviour, commitment to peace and democracy, and the close and friendly relations it has with its neighbours and the large Western democracies. The Prince's wish coincides fully with Argentina's wish".

The Prince's comments, while not specifically mentioning the Falklands, caused some astonishment in the islands. Lisa Riddell, managing editor of the local newspaper, *Penguin News*, said: "We had not been expecting him to make any political references. It was a very tactful speech, but I think the people here will be delighted by what he said."

The Prince is due to arrive in the Falkland Islands on Saturday. "We were planning to welcome him warmly anyway, but now we will be even more enthusiastic," she said.

According to *La Nacion*, Argentina's leading daily newspaper, the Prince's reference to the Falkland Islands had been a rebuff to Seňor Menem, who had suggested resuming direct flights from Argentina to the islands. *Clarin*, another leading daily, said that Foreign Ministry officials attending the banquet had looked uncomfortable during the speech and had "squirmed in their seats".

Senior British sources said that it would have been surprising if, during his visit, the Prince had not made some oblique reference to the Falklands issue. "We did not detect any hostility. When President Menim was in London last year, he too referred to the islands without naming them."

☐ Chile confirmed yesterday that it is to stop flights to the Falkland Islands in protest over Britain's treatment of General Pinochet. In December the Chileans recognised Argentina's claims over the islands.



The Prince of Wales dancing with Zulemita Menem

Tango revival puts sex back on dance floor

By Ruth Gledhill

IF RUMBA is the dance of love, then tango is without doubt the dance of illicit sex.

Banned in Britain until 1907 because it was considered too erotic, the national dance of Argentina was not accepted in the tea salons of London and Paris until 1912. By then, it had been toned down to suit the demands of Western gentility. The more violent checks, suggestive hip thrusts, leghooks and foot swivels were removed.

Once it no longer looked like simulated sex on the dance floor, the fashion for tango teas took off. The dance developed into the staccato, competitive ballroom style that can still be seen on *Come Dancing* today.

A combination of Spanish dance, the Cuban *habanera* and the sexy Argentinian *milonga*, tango emerged from the ghettos of Buenos Aires at the end of the last century.

Recent West End tango shows, such as *Tango Por Dos*, and Sally Potter's film, *The Tango Lesson*, have helped to spark a revival in Britain.

On the social scene, the dance is returning to its highly-sexed, Argentinian roots. Once again it features complex foot swivels, leg kicks and leghooks. The woman's head is moving from a position of arrogant extension out of the man's right arm to one of seductive promise, tucked beneath his chin or on his right shoulder.

The most successful male tango dancers are those who radiate arrogance and dominance. Violent actions designed to subdue a fiery female partner are at a premium.

But it takes two to tango. The woman has to learn a poise that suggests both promise and unavailability at the same time. To the fiery Argentinians, it is a poise that seems to come naturally.

SIMON STEVENS



Camilla Parker Bowles — with her Chloë handbag — in a front-row seat at the fashion house's show in Paris yesterday

Parker Bowles's secret fashion trip

Lisa Armstrong on surprise at McCartney show

CAMILLA PARKER BOWLES made an unannounced appearance at the Chloë fashion show in Paris yesterday. Not even Stella McCartney, the designer, knew that she was coming.

The Prince of Wales's companion slipped quietly into a front-row seat — or as quietly as possible in the presence of 500 photographers and 800 journalists. She arrived with Lord Douro, a friend who has a seat on the board of Vendôme Luxury Group, which owns Chloë, and sat between him and another friend, Mounir Moufarrige, the Lebanese-French managing director of Chloë, who lives in London.

She was not accompanied by a Scotland Yard escort. "If only we'd known she was coming," said a harassed public relations worker, "we could have arranged better security. It's a nightmare, what with having to provide cover for Sir Paul [McCartney] as well."

French security employees removed journalists, including this one, who had the temerity to note down what she was wearing, mainly to while away the time while Marianne Faithfull, Mick Hucknell, Patsy Kensit, Anita Pallenberg and the rest of the audience awaited the arrival of Sir Paul, the designer's father. For the record, Mrs Parker Bowles was dressed in a navy skirt suit and white top from Valentino, one of her favourite designers.

The fashion show appearance has become one of the PR ploys of the Nineties, obviously beneficial to the designers, who are guaranteed blanket coverage in the world's press, but also of strategic use to the guests. Witness Demi Moore's appearance at every fashion show a few seasons ago in her campaign to win a film role as Coco Chanel; Woody Allen and Soon-Yi at Armani, when Allen was seeking to rehabilitate himself with the press; and Minnie Driver at the Halston Show in the run up to last year's Oscars.

Mounir Moufarrige maintained that Mrs Parker Bowles "does wear quite a lot of Chloë". Hard to credit, frankly, given the skinny trousers and peekaboo crocheted lace shirts tied at the waist that McCartney sent out to a rock'n'roll soundtrack.

Each season McCartney's cut and fit improves. This was a collection packed with items to put on a shopping list. Everything, including the evening wear, was accessorised with chunky-heeled boots.

And which Chloë designs lurk in Mrs Parker Bowles's wardrobe? "Er, she's carrying one of our handbags," said Mr Moufarrige.

Former model lay dead for three months

By Adam Fresco

A FORMER model has been found dead in her flat, where she had lain for up to three months. Neighbours claimed that, during that time, her drug-addicted "friends" continued to use her premises to inject heroin.

Lisa Edwards, 33, died around Christmas from a suspected overdose after her promising future was destroyed by heroin and crack cocaine. Her body was discovered on Tuesday in her flat in Dulwich, southeast London. Police are not treating the death as suspicious.

Miss Edwards, who had a daughter, is believed to have tried to break her drug habit several times and had attended a detoxification course.

Audrey Brown, a neighbour, said: "To think I have been living so close and without realising Lisa was dead next door. The last time I saw Lisa she told me she was going away for a while. That was not unusual, so I didn't think anything was wrong."

Esther Parsons, 43, a mother of four who lives in the flat below, said: "I last saw Lisa around Christmas, but we thought we could still hear footsteps in her flat. Even my daughter has heard people up there.

"We have seen people going up the stairs and then heard footsteps inside the flat. I just assumed they were junkies going to use the flat to take drugs. It never crossed my mind there could be a dead person lying there at the same time."



Lisa Edwards: career destroyed by drugs

Lunch club nears its last sitting

By Russell Jenkins
North West Correspondent



Grenfell: food for thought

THEY once gathered in their hundreds to join the "bunfight" at the buffet before settling down to listen to politicians, professors and the occasional film star expounding on a vital issue of the day.

But the Manchester Luncheon Club may be killed off after 77 years by the modern business culture that demands a sandwich and a bottle of mineral water taken at the desk. Ann Boulton, club president, said: "We have a long, proud tradition but this reflects the general tone of the modern city, whereby family firms have been taken over by corporations or multinationals. People just do not have the time for long lunches."

The club was the idea of Sir Raymond Streat, the town clerk, who wanted a place for workers to to be sustained intellectually as well as nutritionally. "There used to be a running buffet, which came to be known as the bunfight because people would come in pick up a plate and dig in," said Mrs Boulton.

Speakers included Hugh Gaitskell, Lady Astor, Ernest Rutherford, Heath Robinson, Joyce Grenfell, Anna Neagle and Bobby Charlton. More are booked for coming months, but then the club may go out with a bang. Mrs Boulton, 60, said that members were being asked to consider spending the club's bank balance on a splendid final lunch.

Attacker mistook sex of victim

By A Correspondent

A SEX attacker who mistakenly snatched a long-haired man off the street, believing him to be a woman, cannot be placed on the sex offenders' register because of a loophole in the law, a court ruled yesterday.

Stefan Cichosz, 22, was jailed for a year. He had abducted his 20-year-old victim in an underpass in central Scotland and had beaten him when he realised his error.

Stirling Sheriff Court was told that Cichosz, unemployed, stalked his target, then attacked when the victim was walking through an underpass. Placing his arm around the man's neck and holding what he said was a knife to his back, he forced him to a secluded riverside path, where he grabbed the back of his head and threw him to the ground.

Angry and frustrated after realising his mistake, he began throwing punches to the head and upper body, causing minor injuries. Cichosz, from Stirling, was later arrested and admitted assault and detaining the man against his will on January 3.

Karina Duffy, the Depute Fiscal, said that, when Cichosz was interviewed by the police, it became clear he had launched the attack for sexual motives. "The complainer has long hair and, from the back, gave the appearance that he was a woman. The accused told police he had had a lot to drink that evening," she said.

The Sheriff, Robert Younger, agreed with her that despite the original motive for the attack, Cichosz could not be placed on the sex offenders' register because the charges were not sexual.

Linda Smith, for the defence, said Cichosz was a first offender, single, and living with his mother and father. "He had taken a quantity of vodka and had experiences in the past of a personality change when drinking spirits. This incident has come out of the blue," she said. "He has shown genuine remorse and lost his job and his girlfriend through this."

This Saturday in the times

JOHN DIAMOND Diary of Courage

'In January I wrote that my cancer was now incurable. As a result my mailbag quintupled overnight'



The Saturday Times Only 60p

Why British shoppers get a raw deal

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

STEPHEN BYERS, the Trade and Industry Secretary, is right that shoppers in this country are paying more for consumer goods than people abroad.

We are being charged more for cars, groceries, clothes and CDs. At first the complaints were based on anecdotal evidence, but there have now been several investigations of the huge price gaps. Now the Government is to do its own. Retailers will no longer be able to get away with overcharging.

A survey by Beuc, the Brussels-based consumer group, recently found that the this country was the most expensive in Europe for a range of goods it surveyed which included audio, video, and electrical appliances, clothes and sports shoes. It found that car radios in London were 36 per cent more expensive than in Rome, and that stereos were 30 per cent dearer in London than in Aachen, Germany.

A study of car prices by the European Commission found that some cars can cost half as much again in this country than in continental countries despite Britain being a fairly big manufacturer of cars.

A report soon to be published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is expected to show that the gaps have widened between prices since its last report in 1995 and that goods and services are the most expensive in the UK than most comparable countries. The last report found that UK shoppers paid 29 per cent more for cars and motorbikes and 31 per cent more for sports gear.

The arrival of the euro will heighten the consumer's feeling of injustice, as it will bring greater prtice transparency.

The action by the Government to get tough on retailers comes as the Office of Fair Trading is investigating car sales, supermarkets, private medicine and over-the-counter drugs. The car sales industry could even be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission after the Trade and Industry Select Committee berated the dealerships for anti-competitive actions.

Consumers may at last have friends in the right places.

But as retailers and others who stand accused of high charging will tell the Government, it is not a simple case of profiteering.

Rather, the costs they bear are higher than many of their international counterparts. This is as much a problem for British business as it is for the high-street shopper.

When McKinsey, the management consultants, produced a report for the Treasury on why Britain languished low in the ranks of international competitiveness and productivity it highlighted the high cost of land and planning restrictions. Land is more expensive in this country because there is less of it than in the United States, France or Germany. Furthermore, the Government is not keen on more out-of-town shopping centres being built. This limits supermarkets' abilities to make economy-of-scale savings.

There are, of course, other blocks to cheap prices such as when one high-street retailer controls much of the market in one area. Or as in the case of car selling where ordinary customers are forced to subsidise cheap deals for the company fleet car buyers.

Energy costs are another obstacle. Big business users have consistently complained about high power costs in the electricity market. The market is now about to be abolished.

There are many problems and anomalies which force UK consumers to pay more than they need to for goods. The Government has much work to do but shaming the culprits, followed by tougher powers which are being given to the OFT have to be a good start. The OFT has pursued high price setters in the past but its lack of teeth has meant many retailers have been able to merely say sorry and then do it all again. They will soon not be able to escape so easily.

SHOPPING AROUND THE WORLD

	BRITAIN	FRANCE	GERMANY	UNITED STATES
Fillet steak (per pound)	£7.00	£4.50	£4.50	£6.00
Adidas top	£35.00	£40.00	£30.00	£30.00
Sony Trinitron TV 21ins	£350.00	£273.00	£321.00	£213.00
BMW 528i	£32,000	£29,947	£26,857	£27,607



Shopping in Boulogne may not be such a tempting prospect for British shoppers once high prices here are tackled

Prescott acts to cut water costs

By Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor

THE drive to cut water bills for households and industry is being led by John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister.

He has told Ian Byatt, head of Ofwat, the water regulator, that he believes the water companies have enough cash to cut bills by 10 per cent.

Mr Byatt is negotiating with the 26 water companies over their pricing regimes for the five years from April next year.

Mr Prescott is concerned that there is too much variation in prices for water for households in various parts of the country. He is particularly concerned that pensioners and poor families might be disadvantaged by a company's charging policy. There have been particular complaints in the southwest of England, which has a high level of pensioner households. Their average bill for water and sewerage is £125, compared with an average bill of £99 for customers of Thames Water Utilities.

Officials at the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions have started negotiations with the water industry chiefs. Mr Prescott is determined to find a way of breaking the monopoly of water companies supplying industry.

The main difficulty is that there is no equivalent national grid for water like that for electricity and gas, but one option being discussed is the possibility of companies in sites bordering two water company areas to be able to choose their supplier.

The same option is not being considered for households.

Officials have only just started work on the project and Mr Prescott is not expected to see a discussion paper for at least six months.



Water: firms can afford bill cuts, says Prescott

Congestion may force flight curbs

By Arthur Leathley, Transport Correspondent

RESTRICTIONS on the number of flights to Britain's busiest airports could be introduced to relieve airport congestion. John Prescott is to head an inquiry into airport competition that will examine whether landing slots are being shared fairly among airlines and if some traffic could be diverted from London.

The Deputy Prime Minister is concerned that too much reliance on airports around the capital is limiting the expansion of regional airports.

BAA, Britain's biggest airport operator, dismisses suggestions that its ownership of three London airports — Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted — encourages anti-competitive behaviour. It points to previous investigations by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission which have found no evidence that it has abused its dominant position.

However, Mr Prescott will be looking closely at ways in which big airlines such as British Airways have switched landing slots between the three airports.

The allocation of so-called "grandfather slots" to airlines, which can keep them indefinitely as long as they are in use, has prompted claims of anti-competitive behaviour by smaller carriers. British Airways retains 40 per cent of Heathrow slots but can switch them to a new route if a rival moves into a fresh market.

Severe overcrowding at Heathrow has forced British Airways to make much greater use of Stansted and Gatwick. Some rival airlines fear the carrier could be securing short-haul slots at the two less congested airports in readiness for further expansion into the American market.



Airports: crowding is leading to hard choices

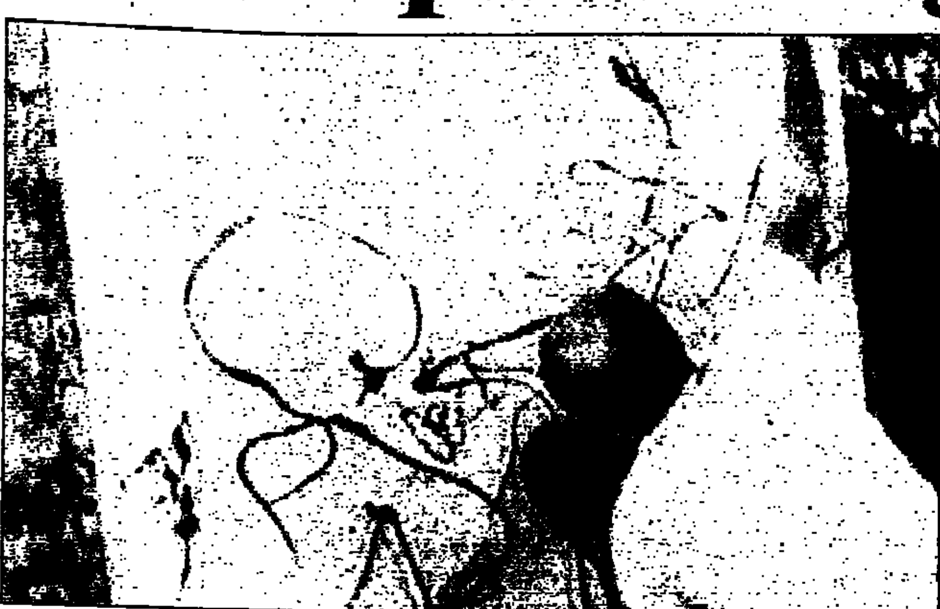
TODAY IN Section 2
ARTS
New films: Robin Williams in Patch Adams – page 36. Who has heard of Stanley Kubrick? – page 38
BOOKS
Sean O'Callaghan on The Ultimate Terrorists – page 40
Peter Porter poems – page 41



هكذا من الأصل



Computer figures out Pollock





A photograph at the Tate shows Jackson Pollock drawing two figures at what will become the right end of his *Number 27, 1950*, right. The action painting appears in the Tate exhibition, which opens today

The arch-Modernist was not quite as abstract as the critics thought, writes Dalya Alberge

HUNDREDS of photographs and films documenting Jackson Pollock at work on his famous action paintings have been fed into a computer, suggesting through digitised imagery that his art was not as abstract as it has seemed.

Figures and objects have emerged through a mass of abstraction, which he created by pouring and dripping paint directly on to a canvas.

Simon Wilson, curator of interpretation at the Tate Gallery — where a Pollock retrospective opens today — explained that digitised versions of 500 photographs revealed how Pollock started with figurative ideas — outlines of figures or objects.

He added: "The critical approach to Pollock until very recently was that he represented the high points of Modernism . . . and complete abstraction. The answer is that he wasn't quite as abstract as he has been made out to be."

The American artist himself, who died in 1956, said in that year: "I'm very representational some of the time, and a little all of the time."

The exhibition, the first in Britain for more than 40 years, is expected to attract around 2,000 a day — more than 200,000 visitors during its run until June 6, which will compete with attendance figures achieved by the Sargent and Bonnard exhibitions. In New York, where the show was first seen, it was attracting 4,000 a day.

As the catalogue explains, photographs and films documenting the working process had always seemed to provide "the definitive proof that there were no figurative images hiding beneath their abstract webs". The contact sheets of all the negatives have been studied in the rough sequence in which they were taken: "Advances in computer technology and software have made it possible to merge details from different photographs. Almost all of the black lines and splatters in the original composition were subsequently overpainted." At one point, Pollock can be seen outlining "the contours of a figure".

Another aspect of the show will highlight Pollock's draughtsmanship. The Tate will be exhibiting three early Pollock sketchbooks dating between the late 1930s and early 1940s which the artist's widow donated to the Metropolitan in New York.

"One of the common criticisms made of Pollock is that he can't draw," said Mr Wilson, yet these sketchbooks "are full of beautiful drawings, from acadamic nudes . . . through to extraordinary Surrealist fantasies. They also include drawings of Old Master paintings." It is the first time the sketchbooks have been seen in Europe: "They startled all Pollock lovers. He could draw."

Leading article, page 23

The rising costs of falling actors

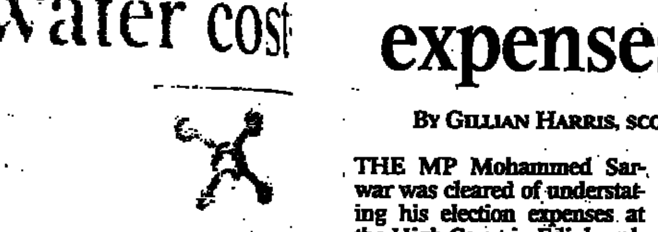
By Dalya Alberge
Arts Correspondent

THE perils of treading the boards have struck home to the Royal Shakespeare Company and Royal National Theatre. They have each had to pay substantial damages to actors who injured themselves.

In separate out-of-court settlements, the RSC paid £50,000 to Peter Warnock, who slipped during a production of *A Christmas Carol* at the Barbican in 1994, and the RNT paid £19,500 for injuries suffered by Maria Friedman when she fell from a tightrope at rehearsals for *Lady in the Dark* at the Lyttleton in 1997.

The argument in Warnock's case was that he had been given incorrect footwear and should have had anti-slip soles. His fall caused severe bruising and swelling to his ankle, preventing him from doing some work in Los Angeles.

Friedman, who is now in *Chicago* in the West End, toppled from a tightrope during rehearsals in the scenery dock of the Lyttleton, hitting a wall and injuring her shoulder.



Sarwar cleared of expenses charge

By Gillian Harris, Scotland Correspondent

THE MP Mohammed Sarwar was cleared of understating his election expenses at the High Court in Edinburgh yesterday shortly before he appeared to give evidence.

The MP for Glasgow Govan, who still faces two charges of attempting to pervert the course of justice, told the court he had received racist death threats. The court heard that the MP was told by Badar Islam, the election rival he is alleged to have bribed with £5,000, that his life was in danger. Mr Sarwar, who said that he was the victim of a plot, told the jury that in 1996 he was attacked by three people who broke his ankle. He did not report the incident to the police for fear of embarrassing the Labour Party and jeopardising his chance of being selected to stand in Govan.

Mr Sarwar said he was shocked to learn that the *News of World* was to publish a story alleging that the MP bribed Mr Islam. He said he and his wife were on their way to a wedding reception when he received a call from a reporter who told him that a story was to alleging that the MP had given his rival a £5,000 bribe to run a losing campaign. "My exact words were: 'The bastards have trapped me.'" Mr Sarwar told the court.

Mr Sarwar said that there was anger towards him in Glasgow after he flew to Pakistan in 1995 to bring back two girls allegedly forced into arranged marriages.

The court heard that the £5,000, delivered to Mr Islam in a bag outside a library, was not a bribe but a loan. Mr Sarwar claimed that Mr Islam, whom he knew to be a gambler, telephoned him begging for money. Mr Islam allegedly said his house was threatened with repossession and his son was ill in hospital.

The case continues.

Inspectors accuse schools of racism

John O'Leary and **Hannah Betts** on a claim of institutional prejudice

MANY schools are institutionally racist, despite the best intentions of their teachers, inspectors said yesterday after criticising underachievement among ethnic-minority pupils.

The Office for Standards in Education expressed concern about the progress made by Pakistani, Bangladeshi, black Caribbean and Gypsy children. Although results were improving, boys in particular continued to lag behind other ethnic groups.

Launching the survey of 25 English local education authorities, Cliff Gould, Ofsted's head of secondary inspection, echoed the description of the Metropolitan Police in last month's report by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny on the murder of Stephen Lawrence. "I think the way that some commentators are defining institutional racism, certainly it would apply to many schools. But it is equally important to recognise that the vast majority of teachers in our schools are not intentionally racist."

The inspectors found that the majority of schools did not even know how their ethnic-minority pupils were faring compared with white pupils. Only half of secondary schools and one in 24 primary schools monitored achievement according to ethnic groupings.

The authors of the survey urged schools to do more to tackle the problems of prejudice and stereotyping. "If schools do not take a stand, what hope is there for breaking the vicious circle of these corrosive forces which exist in society at large?"

Equal opportunities policies had had limited impact. Fewer than a quarter of the authorities had a clear strategy for raising the attainment of ethnic-minority groups and barely a third monitored that attainment. Bangladeshi and Pakistani children performed poorly in primary school, but did better as their English improved. Black Caribbeans, by contrast, tended to start school well but to become disillusioned even before the end of primary education. By the time they took GCSE, the survey said, their results were the worst of all the ethnic groups and they were by far the most likely to be expelled.

Gypsy children, who were included in the survey at the request of the Department for Education and Employment, registered by far the lowest results. Many opted out of education at an early age and, in half of the schools surveyed, no member of the group had sat a GCSE examination.

Jim Rose, Ofsted's head of primary inspection, said schools faced serious problems. "Which of us, never mind schools, has not felt guilty from time to time of unwitting prejudice? It is extraordinarily difficult to imagine that schools are not going to fall foul of this occasionally."

The comments did nothing placate teachers' leaders, who insisted that their members were sensitive to issues of race. Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, said: "Accusing schools of institutional racism is outrageous and counterproductive. The report recognises that most schools are trying hard, have the right policies in place and that the majority of teachers are not intentionally racist. It is profoundly unhelpful to have foolish charges levelled by individuals who are keen to catch the flavour of the month."

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, gave a guarded welcome to the report. "At long last Ofsted has recognised the importance and contribution of schools in tackling racism. But teachers will interpret the term 'institutional racism' as an attack on them. Teachers are not racist."

Charles Clarke, the Schools Standards Minister, also rejected the term. Speaking at a conference on ethnic-minority achievement, he said: "We have over 25,000 schools in Britain. With such a diverse system, I don't think that the phrase 'institutional racism' helps clarify either the overall situation or helps outline the appropriate courses of action to be followed."

SIMON WALKER



The survey found that boys, in particular, in some ethnic minorities continued to lag behind other ethnic groups

HOW ETHNIC GROUPS FARE

The Ofsted survey, which monitored schools in 25 education authorities in England, shows the strengths and weaknesses of the different groups and how boys fare compared with girls

Bangladeshi

The smallest of the main ethnic groups, Bangladeshis are also among the least likely to have been born in Britain. Language problems depress performance at primary level, where their results are causing concern. By GCSE, they have made up ground, but are less likely than other Asians to stay on in education and more likely to end up with manual jobs. Girls do slightly better than boys.

Percentage of population: 0.3
GCSE (5 A*-C) 1996: 25%
GCSE (5 A*-C) 1998: 33%
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 9
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 0.6

Caribbean

Of all the ethnic groups, black Caribbean pupils' results are causing most concern. After a generally good start at school, results fall away even before the end of primary education. They have the lowest scores at GCSE, by far the highest exclusion rate and are the most likely to leave school at 16. Girls do better than boys except in maths and science.

Percentage of population: 0.9
GCSE (5 A*-C) 1996: 23%
1998: 29%
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 160
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 1.0

Chinese

Chinese and other Asian groups from outside the Indian sub-continent are by far the most successful in educational terms. Although only 0.7 per cent of the UK population, they are well represented in selective schools and universities, more than 80 per cent staying in education after the age of 16. They are also the least likely to be excluded from school.

Percentage of population: 0.7
GCSE (5 A*-C) 1998: 61%
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 5
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 2

Indian

More than a quarter of the ethnic-minority population is of Indian descent, and their members comfortably outscore their white counterparts in examinations. Those in education are more likely than other Asian groups to have been born in Britain, so do not face the same language problems. At least two thirds stay on in education after 16.

Percentage of population 1.5
GCSE (5 A*-C) 1998: 54%
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 22
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 4.0

Pakistani

One of the largest ethnic-minority groups, with almost 1 per cent of the population, Pakistani pupils tend to do poorly in primary school, but catch up as their English improves. GCSE results have risen during the Nineties, but are still low by comparison with other groups. More than half — more boys than girls — stay in education beyond the age of 16 and university entry is growing.

Percentage of population: 0.9
GCSE (5 A*-C) 1996: 23%
1998: 29%
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 35
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 2.2

White

National averages for white pupils disguise enormous differences between social groups: working-class boys, for example, are as big a concern to ministers as any ethnic group. Even without such distinctions, white teenagers are more likely than blacks or Asians to leave school at the first opportunity. They are also marginally under-represented in higher education, compared with the main ethnic groups.

Percentage of population: 94.5
GCSE (5 A*-C) 1998: 47%
School exclusions per 1,000 pupils: 28
Percentage of 1998 higher education entrants: 89.8

Hypnosis is last gasp for 700 smokers

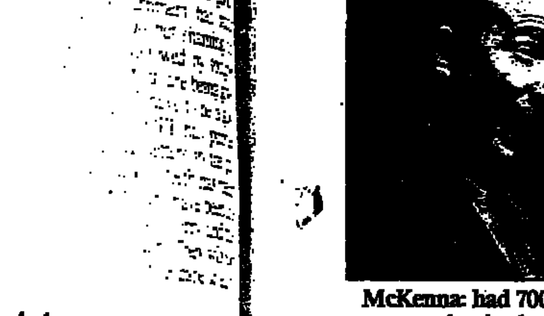
Richard Duce, a 20-a-day man, joins a theatre full of people hoping to kick the habit for No Smoking Day

IF THE people who packed a theatre for a display of mass hypnosis are to be believed, 700 men and women gave up smoking yesterday.

Cigarette butts littered the pavement outside the New London theatre as hundreds of smokers took what they hoped would be their last nicotine fix while queueing to see the hypnotist Paul McKenna. They had tried everything else: nicotine patches, nicotine inhalers and plain willpower had all failed for the addicts who travelled from across London and the Home Counties after McKenna offered free mass hypnosis to coincide with National No Smoking Day.

All voiced *similar reasons* for another attempt to ditch the habit indulged in by 12 million people, of whom eight million would rather quit. Jenny O'Connell, a nurse with a 20-a-day habit, said: "It is for health and money reasons. They went up again in the Budget. I am just sick of being a smoker, coughing in the morning and smelling of stale smoke."





McKenna: had 700 people counting backwards

Caroline Palmer, 28, admitted she rather fancied a man who had recently quit smoking 60 a day and was now a zealous convert. If she, too, could give up, perhaps she was in with a chance. "I'm really hoping its going to work."

She was there with two friends from North London, Catherine Edwards, 29, a fitness instructor, and Catherine White, 26, who works in advertising. "If one us stops then I think we will all stop, but the real test will be when we are out together having a drink," *Miss Palmer said.*

All the people interviewed both before and after the show agreed to be contacted by *The Times* in the months to come to see if McKenna had aided their resolve to quit.

Inside the auditorium the hypnotist first asked people to get rid of their cigarettes if they were determined to quit. He was bombarded with a hundred or more half-filled packets.

Eventually he built up to the main event as he attempted to put the entire audience into a trance. They closed their eyes and, counting backwards from 300, listened to the soporific rythm of the his voice as he urged them to think how much better life would be if they gave up. Of course, if you still needed help, his stop-smoking casette was on sale in the coffee shop.

After the event, organised by Capital Radio, as the audience drifted home or back to work, no-one was going to be seen to light up. Those who stayed behind swapped experiences *and said they now* thought they could quit.



Kicking the habit: Maria Valkenborghs, left, Peta Darling, centre, and Gill Hicks were determined to give up and optimistic that McKenna might be the man to help them to do it

Maria Valkenborghs, 37, a product manager from Richmond, southwest London, said: "I feel good. I don't feel like a cigarette at the moment. I heard about this on the radio yesterday and took a day off to be here. I thought I had to give it a chance."

Gill Hicks, an image consultant from Ealing, West London, who has smoked 20 a day for the past 23 years, said: "I feel very determined. I threw away my packet of cigarettes *yesterday and have a patch on.*"

Peta Darling, a theatre worker, also from Ealing, said: "I feel that just some of the techniques he mentioned will help me to make a conscious effort to stop."

After a typical 30-plus minute journey through London traffic to *The Times* offices in Wapping, potential converts had fallen to 699 at least.

☐ The first helpline aimed at helping pregnant women to give up smoking is to be set up later this year. Smoking while pregnant is known to be ex*tremely harmful: the babies of* women who smoke are smaller and less likely to survive than those of non-smokers.

Tessa Jowell, the Public Health Minister, announced the move during a visit to Quit, the national charity which helps people to stop smoking.

She said: "Smoking kills 120,000 people in Britain every year. And every year, while it is killing 120,000 people, it is harming thousands of babies in the womb. That can't be right.

*"Seven out of ten adult smok*ers want to quit. That includes thousands of pregnant women every year who want to quit, not only for their own health, but for the health of their baby in the womb.

"Smoking during pregnancy harms the unborn baby and leads to lower birthweight. Babies of smoking parents are more likely to suffer illness or even cot death. We must provide pregnant smokers with all the help we can to stop smoking."

The Government-funded *service is part of a strategy* aimed at cutting the proportion of pregnant women who smoke from 23 per cent to 15 per cent by 2010, which will mean persuading 55,000 people to give up. It will be included as part of wider arrangements for a national smoking helpline. Funding will come from a £50 million public education package.

Ms Jowell said the aim was to provide an "intensive programme of counselling support, tailored directly to the *needs of each individual". She added: "We want a service* which reaches women early in their pregnancy, is accessible, flexible, and provides continued support throughout and beyond the pregnancy.

"Experience from home and overseas suggests that providing pregnant women with this type of support can double their chances of quitting successfully."

Suicide in custody 'a voluntary decision'

BY ELIZABETH JUDGE

THE girlfriend of a man who committed suicide in police custody was not entitled to £8,690 damages because it was his choice to kill himself, law lords were told yesterday.

Sheila Reeves was ineligible for compensation from the Metropolitan Police, David Pannick, QC, said, because Martin Lynch, who was facing deception charges, had committed "a voluntary act by a person of sound mind".

Mr Lynch hanged himself at Kentish Town police station in March 1990. He had already made one attempt to kill himself that day. Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, was challenging a ruling by the Court of Appeal in November 1997 that the force should pay damages to Ms Reeves. The court ruled that the force had failed in its responsibility to take care of Mr Lynch by leaving open a flap in his cell door, on which he tied a shirt as a ligature.

Nicholas Blake, QC, for Ms Reeves, pointed out that in 1968 the Home Office had instructed all police authorities that cell flaps should not be left open because of the suicide risk. The hearing continues.

Accusers are liars, says war crime man

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A RETIRED British Rail ticket collector denied murdering Jews during the Nazi occupation of his home town in Belarus, an Old Bailey jury was told yesterday.

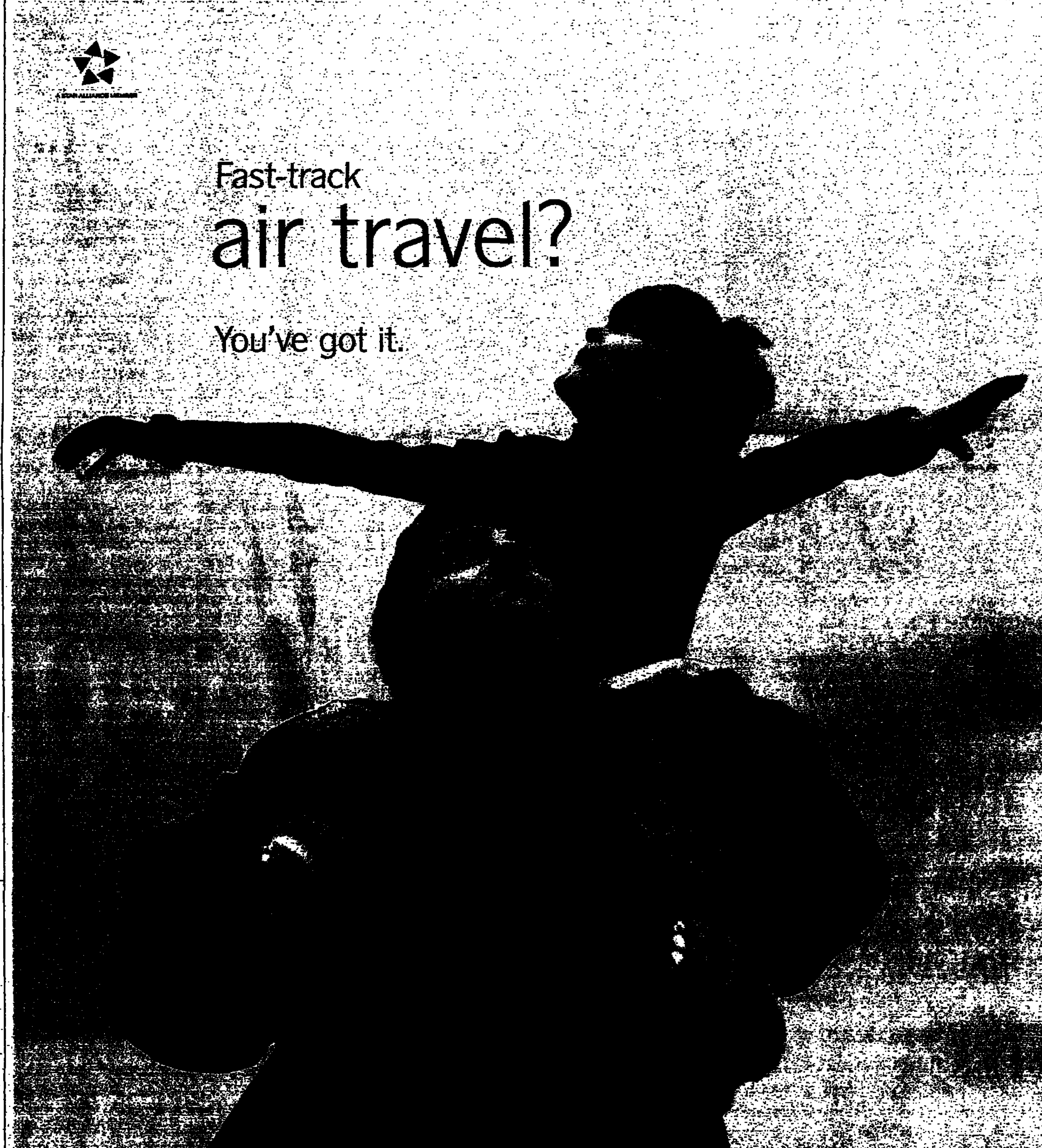
Anthony Sawoniuk told police investigating war crimes: "No one can put a finger on me that I killed a Jew. The people who gave you that evidence are liars. The people over there will tell you anything for a couple of bob."

He said that people still living in Domachevo knew nothing about what went on during the Second World War. "They are liars. They want to destroy my life," he said.

Mr Sawoniuk, 77, of southeast London, denies four charges of murdering Jews while a member of a police unit in Domachevo in 1942. He is accused of collaborating with the Nazis and leading police squads to hunt down Jews trying to escape massacre.

He said when interviewed in 1996 that to be accused of killing Jews was idiotic. "I used to work for them. They gave me food. I could not go against those people."

The case resumes on Monday. *(PA News)*





‘As bad as it gets’ in the NHS

Ian Murray reports on a nurse’s despairing tale about the daily dilemmas caused by understaffing

THE time was 11pm, two hours after the nurse coming off the ward was supposed to have finished her shift. She sat down and wrote a letter to Christine Hancock, general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, spelling out the dilemma of working for the NHS.

The staff nurse had been forced to choose which of her needy patients to give attention to. Two had just had operations: one had unstable blood pressure that needed constant monitoring in case of a stroke; the other had an unstable blood sugar level that threatened to plunge him into shock.

Another patient was in severe pain from a catheter. A confused patient kept trying to jump out of bed. "The other 13 patients were shouting for bottles, bedpans, pain relief — or just to talk."

Miss Hancock read the letter from the "tired and despairing" nurse to delegates at the college's annual conference in Harrogate yesterday. It illustrated how shortages of well-qualified staff were so acute that nurses had to ignore some seriously ill patients so that they could look after others, she said.

Having to choose between acutely ill patients equally deserving of a nurse's skills was as bad as the job could get, she said. "We know that the feeling that you can't do your job properly forces many nurses to quit the NHS."

Nurses were under such pressure because hospitals were trying to save money by replacing senior grades with juniors and auxiliaries. "We need — patients need — to be clear what a safe nursing skill mix really means. The Government needs to listen.

"Nurses need the power to define what safe staffing levels are. Weakening the skill mix is not about saving money. It is wasting money and it has got to stop."

Nurses had to make management and patients understand how central they were to healthcare. "We need to become much better at communicating nurses' contribution to health improvement. We don't have any credibility unless we can show that extra registered nurses improve the quality of patient care."

The problem for nurses was that their skills were often invisible. "Few people understand what we do. They think we are helpful, they think we are kind, they think we are ministering angels, but often people haven't got a clue what nurses are actually doing. The trouble is, because few people understand what we do, nursing is undervalued. We get cut out of the loop too easily."

New performance indicators were needed to highlight the importance of nursing care and to measure the "human touch". "We've got league tables for death rates, why not have them for the incidents of pressure sores, for pain management, nutritional standards, or the number of patients who say that their discharge home was properly planned? When we know how important nurses are to quality patient care, when we know more registered nurses mean death rates are cut by 5 per cent, why not publish information on staffing levels, the skill mix of qualified and unqualified nursing staff and staff turnover?"

Care statistics alone were not enough, Miss Hancock said. "Many of our hospitals are depressing, dirty, demoralising buildings long past their sell-by date. Even if the buildings are sound, inside you will often find the paint is flaking, windows are grimy and the sheets haven't been changed.

"The environment of care is not just about bricks and mortar. It is about noise, equipment and patients' basic rights to privacy and dignity. It means an end to the humiliation of mixed-sex wards."

The congress, which earlier this week reluctantly approved this year's 4.7 per cent pay award for most nurses, cheered her when she said that higher wages went a long way to halt declining standards. Pay alone was not the whole answer, however.

"There is something about the culture of nursing that is almost shy about describing our impact on patient care. We can't afford to be shy any more. The real healthcare challenge of the next century is realising the value of nursing."


CHARLES KNIGHT

Christine Hancock addressing Royal College of Nursing delegates yesterday on the dilemma created on the wards by a shortage of qualified staff

Designer vouchers give young cyclists a head start

Ian Murray on a campaign that has led to top-label helmets going ‘on prescription’



Nurse Ross Meeks backs the campaign for safer cycling

DESIGNER cycling helmets costing up to £60 will be available "on prescription" thanks to a campaign by the Royal College of Nursing to make them compulsory.

Under the scheme, to be launched in two weeks, cyclists will be able to collect a voucher from health centres and GPs' surgeries that will entitle them to a helmet with the prestigious Bell label at a cost of only £8.50.

The RCN campaign, backed at its annual congress in Harrogate yesterday, was inspired by a nurse in whose arms a 13-year-old boy died from head injuries he received in a cycling accident.

"He had gorgeous blond hair," said Angela Lee, a paediatric trauma nurse at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading. "There was no a mark on him, but his brain was mush. We nursed him for eight months, but in the end he died in my arms."

Three weeks later, a 14-year-old boy was taken to the hospital with a serious brain injury after a cycling accident. "I decided enough was enough and something had to be done," Miss Lee said. She founded the Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust and set about gathering the facts to prove that helmets would save lives and prevent permanent brain damage.

The case of the 14-year-old boy highlighted the difficulties in getting children to wear helmets. "He was a streetwise, tough kid who thought it would never happen to him, so he didn't wear a helmet," Miss Lee said. "Like so many children he thought only nerds wore helmets."

She found that children were happier to wear a helmet if it had a designer label. But these can cost from £40 to £60, compared with the unlabelled varieties, which sell for about £12.50.

Every year, 200 cyclists are killed and 4,500 seriously injured on Britain's roads. About 70 per cent of those killed and 50 per cent of those injured have head injuries. The campaign Miss Lee started in Reading in 1993 has led to a trebling of the number of helmets worn and a 45 per cent reduction in head injuries in the town.

The RCN has run into opposition to its campaign for compulsory helmets from cyclist organisations who claim that they would interfere with freedom of choice. They say that, in Australia, fewer people rode bicycles after all cyclists were forced by law to wear helmets.

Miss Lee said this fall proved only temporary and, since then, New Zealand, Iceland, 16 American states and two Canadian provinces had made helmets compulsory. The RCN will now lobby the Government to get Britain to follow their example.

The compulsory helmets scheme, a joint initiative between the RCN and the helmet manufacturer Bell, does not involve any public money.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Care home ‘negligent’ over death

A care home that charges up to £1,800 a week was accused yesterday of gross negligence after a patient was found dead in a ditch. Alan Craze, the East Sussex Coroner, recorded a verdict of neglect after hearing how John Hanaphy, 41, a former postman, was able to wander off to his death. His body was found 12 days later in woodland near The Vine care home, run by Libra Health, in Crowborough, East Sussex. Staff had let standards of vigilance drop, the coroner said. "In my view there was gross negligence."

Walker dies

An inexperienced walker has been found dead by a mountain rescue team in a part of Derbyshire's Peak District blanketed in waist-high snow. Police had been searching for Duc Thu Do, 38, from Leicester, since Sunday.

Treasure returns

Scotland Yard will today hand back important antiquities to Egypt that had been smuggled out of the country by Jonathan Tokeley-Parry, a restorer who disguised them as trinkets. They include five tomb reliefs and 27 papyri.

Family found

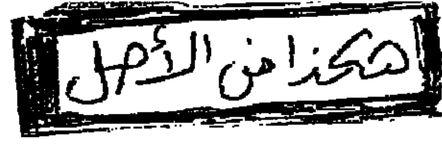
Amanda Sparrow, 20, and her children Stephanie, 3, Abigail, 2 and Sophie, 8 months, who vanished from Southampton on Friday, have been found in Blackburn. Sophie had been admitted to hospital with dehydration and hypothermia.

Self-drive bus

A bus passenger who had slept past his stop drove off from a Birmingham depot in a double-decker whose engine had been left running, picking up a woman passenger on the way. He faces two criminal and two driving charges.

Moth invasion

Hundreds of Indian meal moths that hatched in a packet of bird seed forced a couple to leave their home and have it fumigated. Peter and Christine Lightfoot, of Reading, spent two weeks in an hotel before returning home.



Urgent plan to stop London flooding

Disaster caused by rapidly rising water table could be averted with boreholes, reports Nick Nuttall

A NETWORK of 50 boreholes, able to siphon off billions of litres of water a year, is to be drilled to save London's buildings and Underground network from flooding.

The scheme, drawn up by companies and organisations including Thames Water, the Environment Agency and the Association of British Insurers, follows alarm over rising groundwater levels under London since the loss of water-hungry industries such as brewing and engineering.

Experts fear that, unless urgent action is taken, buildings with deep foundations and basements, some underground car parks, telecommunications and electricity cables and parts of the Tube may become unstable in as little as five years.

The £10 million project could become a blueprint for other cities — including Birmingham, Manchester, Paris and Milan — where a rising water table is a threat.

John Sexton, of Thames Water, said the water table was rising by as much as three metres a year. "It is time to act, not to delay. In five years we will have a real threat on our hands," he said.

A spokesman for London Underground said yesterday that the water table was 100 metres below Trafalgar Square in about 1905. In the 1950s it was recovering and stood at about 80m below Sir Edwin Landseer's lions. By 1995 it had climbed to about 50m below street level and it was now about 40m.

It has put the water table within reach of some of the deepest parts of the Underground network and deep foundations in the City of London, some of which are only 20m below the ground.

While the rate of recovery has slowed, the water table is still on course to return to its natural level of between 20 and zero metres below street level in areas of Westminster and the City by 2010.

The London Underground has spent £100 million in the past few years on securing parts of the network, including sections of the Bakerloo and Northern lines that were in danger of flooding and short-circuiting. But there remain worries that the rising water table will put pressure on the clay soil and trigger subsidence of sensitive equipment such as escalators.


The Millennium Dome: already has a borehole

Experts fear that some buildings with deep foundations may "pop out of the ground" unless action is taken to lower the water table.

Mr Sexton said the scheme, to be unveiled next week at a conference organised by the City of London for business leaders and the government office for London, will extract up to 70 million litres of water a day.

A third of the water, siphoned from the 50 boreholes to be developed during the next six years, will be used for drinking. However, some will be so salty that it is too costly to treat. Mr Sexton said they planned to discuss with landowners and councils ideas for reusing this water, including ornamental ponds and fountains, car washes and horticulture. Surplus water will be dispatched down the sewer system into rivers.

Thames Water has put up £8 million of the £10 million, but believes that other organisations and companies that stand to benefit should chip in.

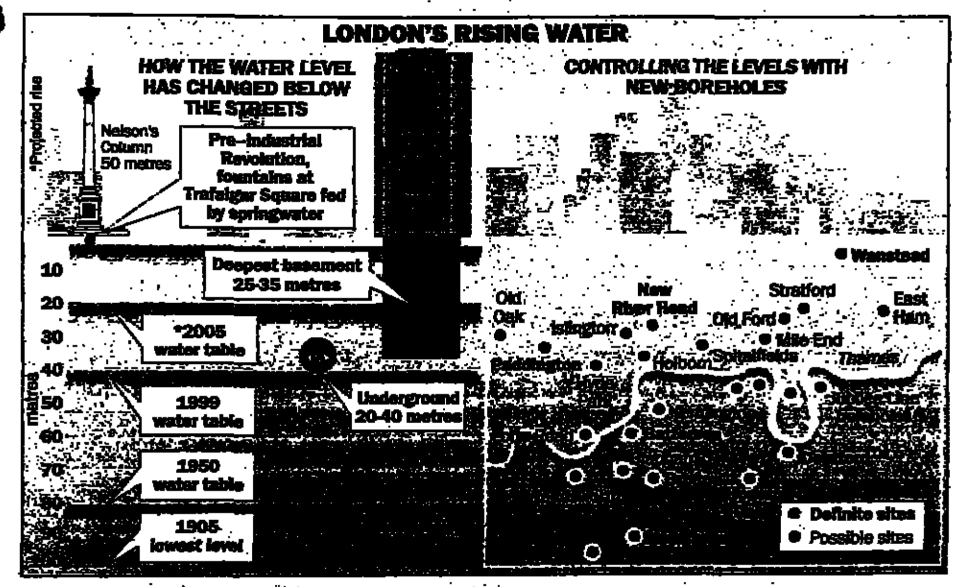
The threat of the rising water level is already adding to construction costs. The new British Library has a 35m deep basement with reinforced walls to counter flooding.

Thames Water, which has submitted the proposal to Nick Raynsford, the Minister for London, estimates that the annual running costs will be about £2 million.

The scheme has already started. Boreholes at Streatham and Merton in southwest London have been opened and work is under way at Islington, Battersea and Brixton. Other sites have been identified and the company is studying other, undisclosed sites, where it is likely to apply for planning permission to complete the full network.

Bill Alexander, chief executive of Thames Water and chairman of the project's steering group, Gardit, said yesterday: "We have worked hard to develop this solution and are keen to see it implemented as soon as possible. There is no time to waste."

A spokesman for Birmingham City Council, where pumping has begun in some low lying-basements and cellars, said yesterday that they were carrying out studies with Severn Trent Water to see how easy it might be to siphon off the rising water table.




Parts of Malton were still flooded yesterday. The repair bill is likely to run into millions

A close call for Marina the water baby

By Paul Wilkinson

JANE HARTLEY'S baby will have a personal reason to recall the great floods of 1999. Her name, Marina, marks the day when the fast-rising waters almost cut her parents off from hospital as she was about to be born.

Marina's mother and her partner, Geoff Hutchinson, 44, had left their countryside home near Kirkbymoorside, on the edge of the North York Moors, en route for York District Hospital 25 miles away, early on Monday morning. But they soon realised the 40-minute journey was not going to be the usual simple run.

Mr Hutchinson, a stonemason, said: "I knew the way round the back roads, so I thought we'd get through." But when they reached the town of Pickering, ten miles away, he realised the way was impassable.

By that time 33-year-old Miss Hartley's contractions were only five minutes apart. "She was lying on the backseat uttering words of Anglo-Saxon origin," he said.

"Five minutes from Malton, Jane's contractions were only four minutes apart so we decided there was no way we were going to York." He diverted to the community hospital in Malton. "We arrived just after 7am and at 8.15am our baby daughter arrived."

Mother and Marina, who weighed in at 7lb 5oz, are both doing fine back at home in the village of Appleton-le-Moor.

The total number of homes flooded by the waters rose yesterday to more than 200. The cost of repairs to homes and businesses will run into tens of millions of pounds.

Malcolm Tarling, of the Association of British Insurers, said similar flooding which hit the East and South Midlands last April cost insurers £100 million. "The value of the damage in Ryedale could be between tens and hundreds of millions of pounds."

Ulster motorists queue to beat petrol tax rise

Cross-border drivers fill up at Irish garages, report Martin Fletcher and Audrey Magee

QUEUES formed at garages on the southern side of the Irish border yesterday as drivers travelled up to 40 miles to avoid the Budget increases on petrol and cigarettes.

Customs officials and petrol retailers called the 11.5 per cent increase a smugglers' charter. A record differential of 29p per litre for diesel and 21p for unleaded petrol has been created, giving drivers the chance to save £250 on a lorry and £9 on filling up an ordinary car.

Even before the Budget, so much fuel was being smuggled north that the Exchequer was losing at least £100 million a year in duty. Half the Province's stations were buying smuggled fuel, some of which was being ferried to England and Scotland.

Ray Holloway, the director of the Petrol Retailers' Association, said the problem was so severe that at least two big-name oil companies were considering pulling out of Northern Ireland.

He was "astounded" by Mr Brown's announcement, and accused the Treasury of ignoring strenuous representations from the industry. "All he did yesterday in the case of Northern Ireland's smugglers was give them another margin of op a litre. This will drive legal traders to buy illegal fuel simply to stay in business.

"If the choice is to lose your business or take the risk of buying cheap illegal fuel, what would you do?"

Customs and Excise has been fighting a losing battle to patrol the 300 miles of Britain's only land border. One senior source said: "We are already facing a severe problem and this is going to make it even worse."

In 1998, Customs officers seized 420,000 litres of smuggled fuel, and obtained evidence of another 24 million litres that was not seized. But officials said that was only a tiny fraction of what got through, and the Northern Ireland Select Committee of the House of Commons has announced a full investigation.

The IRA is suspected of involvement in the smuggling operation. Some of the fuel is badly adulterated by chemicals used to remove dyes from agricultural diesel on which there is even less duty, and many new vehicles have been damaged.

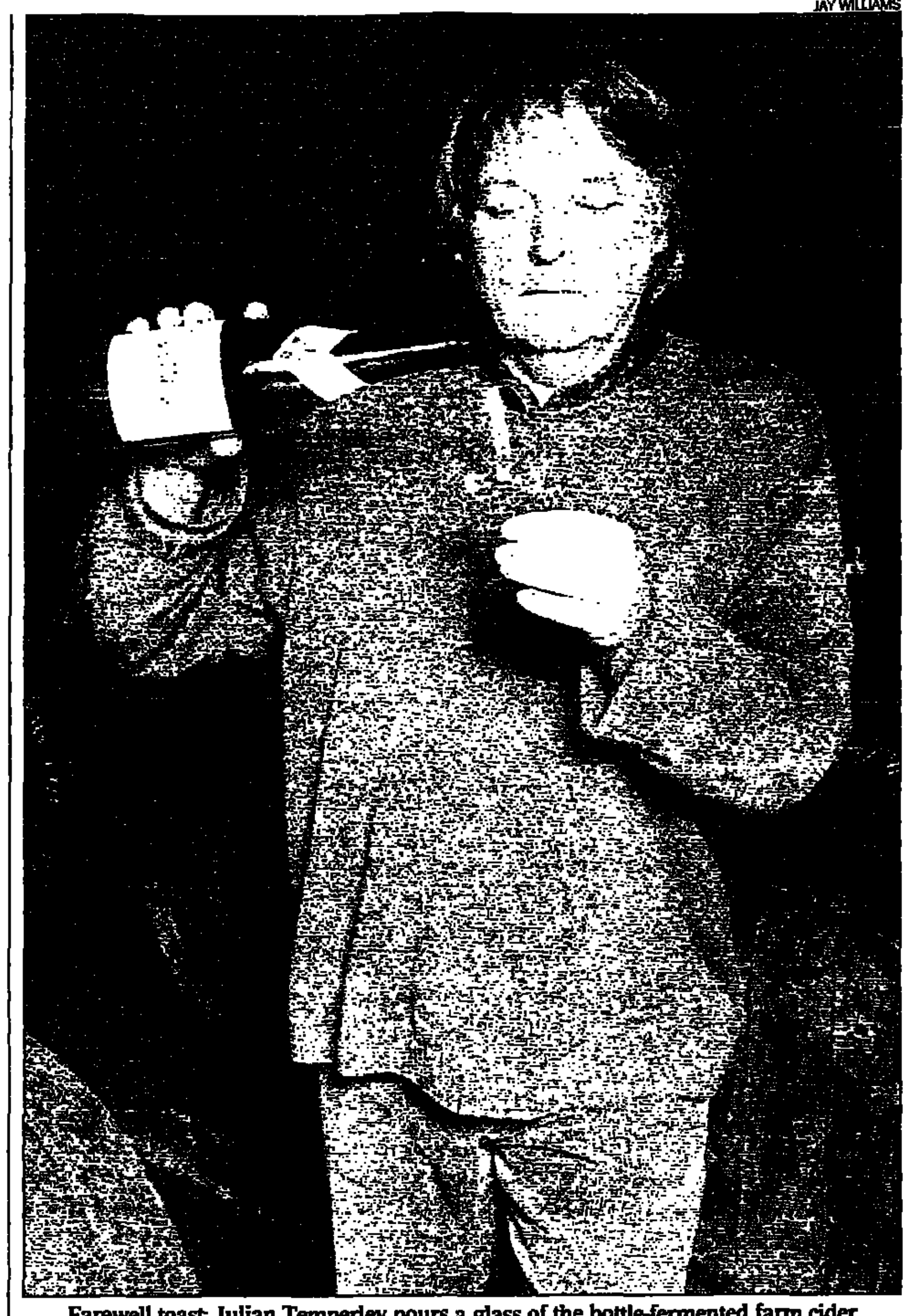
John Allen, a petrol station owner in Londonderry, said he knew of 11 stations within a five-mile radius that had gone out of business in the last 18 months. His sales had halved when Mr Brown raised fuel duties by 11.5 per cent in his 1998 Budget, and now the Chancellor had done the same again. He was surviving only on the profits from his shop. "It's very bad news," he said.

Padraic Waters, who owns garages on both sides of the border, said that his station at Castleblayney, Co Monaghan, was cashing in. "Already we have people driving 30 to 40 miles from the north. There is a queue of about 100 yards of trucks outside the station."

John Kirk, who runs a petrol station four miles from the border with Newry, said his business increased yesterday by up to 15 per cent, all of it from Ulster. He said: "The northern people are very shrewd. They know where there is value."

Noel Murphy is considering closing some of his family's five garages in the north. The company is already losing 10,000 gallons of fuel sales each month to the Republic. "What use is a shop at a petrol station if you can't even sell fuel because it's cheaper a few miles away?"

JAY WILLIAMS



Farewell toast: Julian Temperley pours a glass of the bottle-fermented farm cider

Bubble bursts for sparkling cider drinkers

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES, WEST OF ENGLAND CORRESPONDENT

JULIAN TEMPERLEY popped the cork on a bottle of his farmhouse cider yesterday and drank a farewell toast to the West Country's answer to champagne.

The Somerset farmer is one of a handful of producers still making bottle-fermented cider in the traditional way. But the death sentence of the cottage industry he helped to revive was hidden in the small-print of the Budget.

Overnight a drink that fuelled generations of farmworkers but was still fit to grace the smartest of dinner parties has been killed off. The duty on a bottle of Mr Temperley's dry sparkling cider has been increased from 45p a litre to £1.61. The increase applies to sparkling ciders and perries with wired-on corks and alcohol content above 7.5 per cent.

Every bottle Mr Temperley produces now attracts five times the duty of the carbonatedcider mass-produced by companies such as Bulmer and Matthew Clarke.

The traditional drink is the indirect casualty of a war between the Italian sparkling wine industry and the manufacturers of a cheap imitation made in Liverpool. "Frascati" and "Lambini" may look Italian with their copycat labels and pictures of Venice but they are made from concentrated imported pear juice on the banks of the River Mersey. Because they do not use grapes the drinks have until now been taxed at the far lower rate applied to cider. After complaints by manufacturers of drinks such as Asti Spumante, the Government decided to put the squeeze on the copycat industry which is believed to have sold £20 million worth of its products last year.

The closure of this loophole has trapped Mr Temperley and the handful of other cider makers still using traditional methods. With its wired-on mushroom cork and dark green bottle, Burrow Hill is sold in Fortnum & Mason and raved about by drinks writers.

Inside the farm's centuries-old cider house, wooden apple presses stand alongside vast oak vats each holding up to 10,000 gallons of fermenting juice. Most of the cider he produces will be sold in plastic gallon containers to callers at the small farm shop.

It is production of the far smaller quantities of bottle-fermented cider, made from single varieties of apples such as Kingston Black and Stoke Red, that will now end. It costs £4.80 a bottle at the farm: £6.75 at Fortnum and Mason.

Although the increased tax will affect fewer than 10,000 bottles or 10 per cent of his total production, he said: "This is our flagship product. You could serve it at the table of any restaurant in the world."

Parental leave 'must be paid'

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

PLANS to give all employees three months' paid parental leave when they have a baby or adopt a child will be meaningless unless the time off is paid, unions said yesterday.

One in three workers who are parents believe they will not be able to afford to take advantage of parental leave if it means giving up pay for 12 weeks, a study by the Trades Union Congress shows. A further 12.5 per cent say they would not take parental leave, even though they could afford to, because they fear their boss would not like it.

Just 15 per cent of workers say they intend to take up their full entitlement. Professional women are the most likely to use it and unskilled men the least likely.

John Monks, General Secretary of the TUC, said he hoped that the findings would help to stimulate a national debate about how the regulations for parental leave should be framed. "Good employers already recognise that making parental leave paid is a key element in promoting family-friendly employment and encouraging staff loyalty," he said. Parental leave is set to be introduced in December when Britain adopts the social chapter. It will guarantee parents three months off work and will be available to both mothers and fathers in addition to maternity and paternity leave.

Battle lines are already being drawn up between the TUC's Paid Parental Leave Campaign, which has the support of childcare organisations, and the Confederation of British Industry, which believes that paid parental leave would put an "unsustainable cost on business".

Ministers are in a difficult position. There is now widespread acknowledgement that the long-hours culture is putting great pressure on family relationships.

Rush to beat duty deadline

SOLICITORS were rushing yesterday to beat a deadline for increased stamp duty on the sale of high-priced properties (Robin Young writes).

The new rates of duty, 2.5 per cent on sales of more than £250,000 and 3.5 per cent on deals over £500,000, come into force on March 16. Where solicitors are able to exchange contracts and complete the transfer by that date the old rates will apply. Those who exchanged on or before Budget day will pay the old rate, no matter how long it takes to complete. Giles Pemberton of the Knightsbridge solicitors, Pemberton's, said: "We certainly have clients for whom we are rushing to complete; 3.5 per cent on a sum over £500,000 is an appreciable sum to anybody."

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HOW BROWN SOLD THE BUDGET

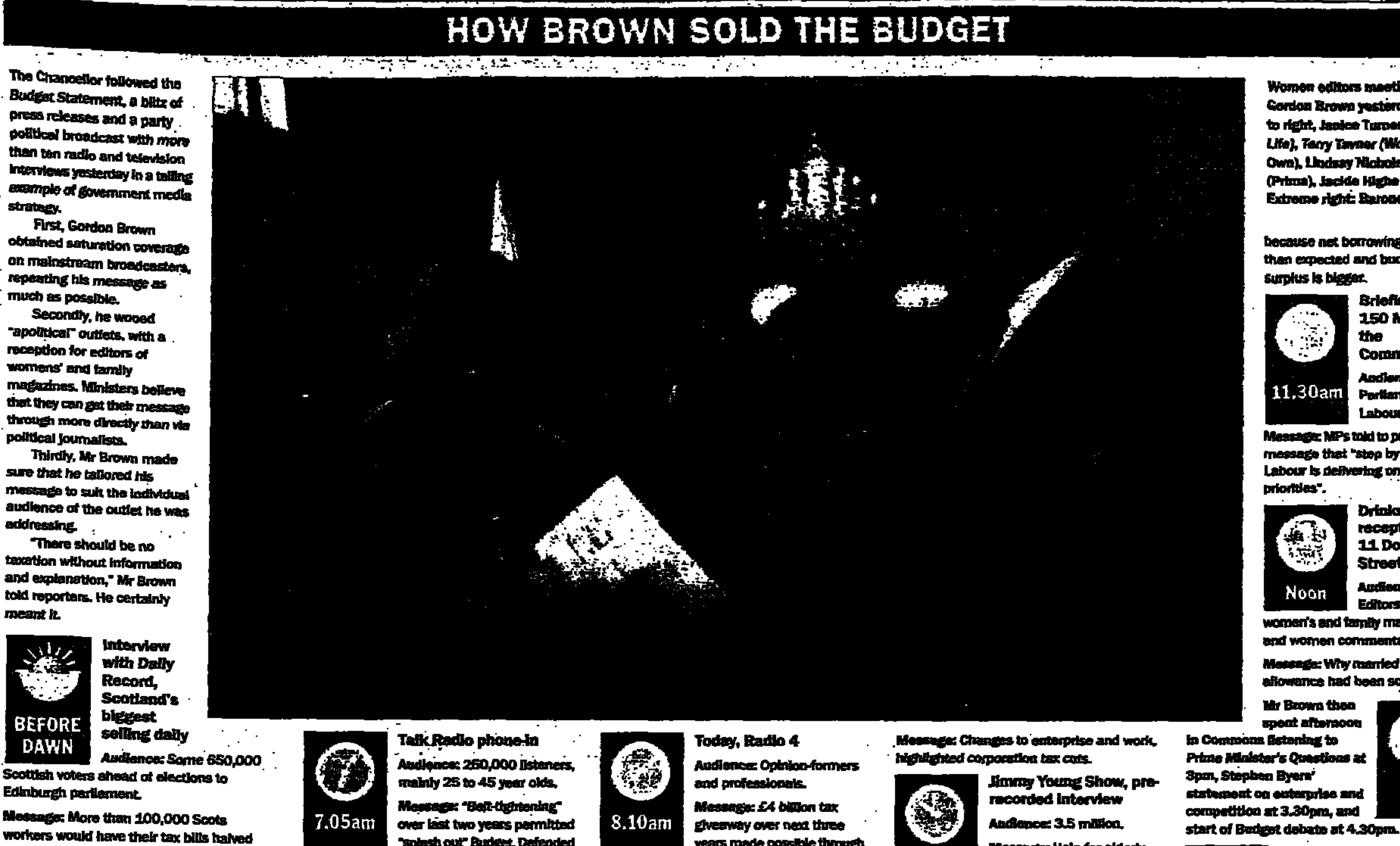
The Chancellor followed the Budget Statement, a blitz of press releases and a party political broadcast with more than ten radio and television interviews yesterday in a telling example of government media strategy.

First, Gordon Brown obtained saturation coverage on mainstream broadcasters, repeating his message as much as possible.

Secondly, he wooed "apolitical" outlets, with a reception for editors of womens' and family magazines. Ministers believe that they can get their message through more directly than via political journalists.

Thirdly, Mr Brown made sure that he tailored his message to suit the individual audience of the outlet he was addressing.

"There should be no taxation without information and explanation," Mr Brown told reporters. He certainly meant it.



Women editors meeting Gordon Brown yesterday: left to right, Janice Turner (That's Life), Terry Tavner (Woman's Own), Lindsay Nicholson (Prima), Jackie Highe (Bella). Extreme right: Baroness Jay

BEFORE DAWN — Interview with Daily Record, Scotland's biggest selling daily
Audience: Some 650,000 Scottish voters ahead of elections to Edinburgh parliament.
Message: More than 100,000 Scots workers would have their tax bills halved by the new 10p rate.

BEFORE DAWN — The Sun – signed article
Audience: 3.8 million
Message: "My Budget responded to The Sun's call for cuts in income tax rates."

7.05am — Talk Radio phone-in
Audience: 250,000 listeners, mainly 25 to 45 year olds.
Message: "Belt-tightening" over last two years permitted "splash out" Budget. Defended rises in fuel duty.

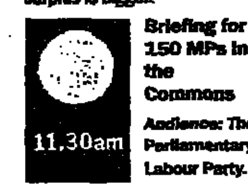
7.30am — GMTV interview with Eamonn Holmes
Audience: 1.5 million.
Message: Emphasised help for pensioners, children and families.

8.10am — Today, Radio 4
Audience: Opinion-formers and professionals.
Message: £4 billion tax giveaway over next three years made possible through falls in cost of servicing public debt and social security payments.

9am — Business breakfast at London hotel
Audience: 150-strong audience, 3,000 business people via television link, also internet feed.
Message: Changes to enterprise and work, highlighted corporation tax cuts.

10am — Jimmy Young Show, pre-recorded interview
Audience: 3.5 million.
Message: Help for elderly, especially fivefold increase of winter fuel allowance to £100.

10.30am — Treasury briefing
Audience: Political and business editors.
Message: Fiscal situation is much tighter than expected because net borrowing is less than expected and budget surplus is bigger.



11.30am — Briefing for 150 MPs in the Commons
Audience: The Parliamentary Labour Party.
Message: MPs told to put across message that "step by step Labour is delivering on its priorities".

Noon — Drinks reception at 11 Downing Street
Audience: Editors of women's and family magazines, and women commentators.
Message: Why married couple's allowance had been scrapped.

3pm — Mr Brown then spent afternoon in Commons listening to Prime Minister's Questions at 3pm, Stephen Byers' statement on enterprise and competition at 3.30pm, and start of Budget debate at 4.30pm.

6pm — Interview on Radio Five Live
Audience: Commuters
Message: Mr Brown defended the petrol duty rises and emphasised that most taxpayers would benefit from the Budget.

Blair lying over tax burden, say Tories

BY PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

TONY BLAIR was accused of lying last night after he refused to accept repeated claims by William Hague that taxes would go up by £7 billion in the current year as a result of Labour's three Budgets.

The charge was made by Francis Maude, the Shadow Chancellor, after a day of increasingly bitter argument over the impact of Gordon Brown's tax-cutting package on Tuesday. The Conservatives have gone on the offensive because of Mr Blair's admission last week that the "tax burden" was likely to rise in the present Parliament — as figures in the Treasury Red Book, its annual economic forecast and analysis, have shown for two years.

In the Treasury publication on Tuesday, the tax burden figure for the end of the Parliament was put at 37.1 per cent of Gross Domestic Product compared with 36.6 per cent at the start of the Parliament. Economists say it is a crude measure because tax burden figures are affected by people paying more tax when earnings rise more than the rate of inflation. The figures also rise automatically if GDP falls.

However, Labour regularly attacked Conservatives over the tax burden, which rose through the Major Government. Yesterday the Prime Minister pointed out that the Tories had projected a higher tax burden of 37.8 per cent at the end of this Parliament in their last Budget.

Mr Hague said that using Treasury figures, the total tax increase in the coming year as a result of the three Budgets was £7.1 billion and in the following year would be £10.5 billion. He said: "With the pickpocket Chancellor and stealth taxes, taxes have gone up, are going up and are going to carry on going up." Mr Blair dismissed the claim. "The tax burden is falling, not rising . . . taxes are going to be lower at the end of this Parliament than planned by the Tory party."

Anatole Kaletsky, page 22
Letters, page 23

Chancellor pulls the strings to make new Labour dance

Peter RIDDELL ON POLITICS

The mystery over the meaning of new Labour/Third Way has been solved. Gordon Brown's Budget speech provided the fullest definition of those elusive terms, even if the Chancellor himself is too fastidious to allow the words Third Way to pass his lips. Within a framework of fiscal and monetary conservatism, Mr Brown is offering a new version of government activism or social engineering. This is more significant than yesterday's tiresome exchanges at Prime Minister's Questions over the impact of tax changes. (The answer is that the tax burden is rising under Labour but many, though not all, people will be better off after Mr Brown's measures.)

He has rejected the old Labour view that governments can either fine-tune the level of economic activity or change the direction of industry or society through big spending programmes. However, he retains the belief that governments can influence behaviour, primarily through the tax system but also via regulations. Mr Brown has changed business, company, petrol and landfill taxes to penalise high and polluting energy use by industry and by drivers.

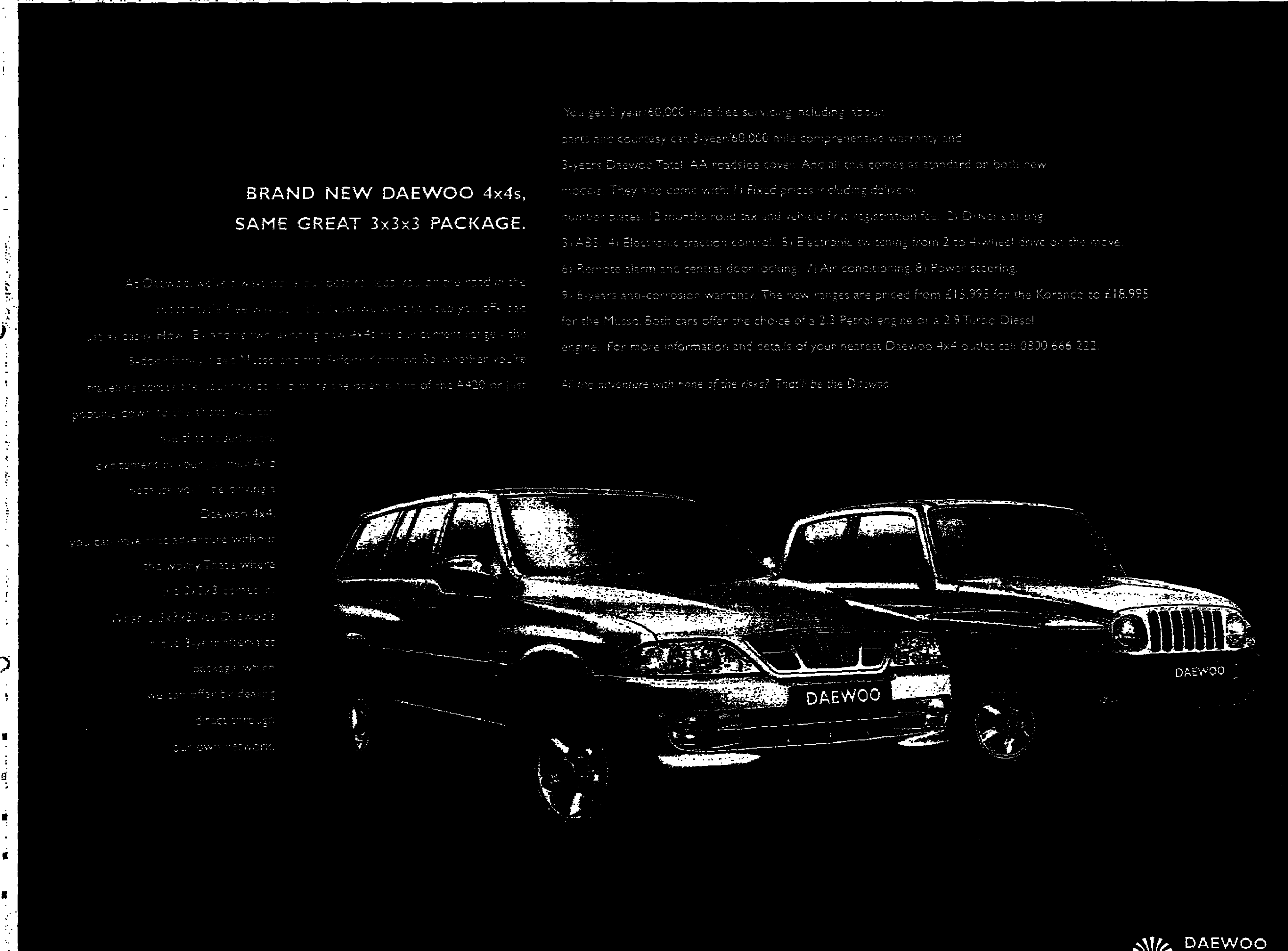
His tendency to introduce complicated new reliefs and incentives contrasts with Nigel Lawson's desire to abolish at least one tax per Budget and to aim for neutrality and simplicity. However, this admirable policy was often breached in practice. Governments of whatever hue cannot resist introducing new incentives and reliefs to achieve what they see as desirable economic or social objectives.

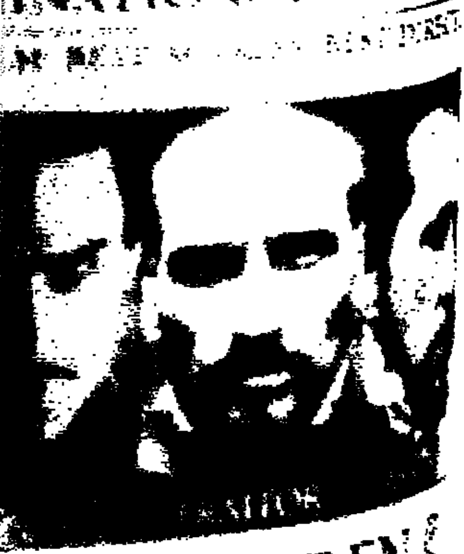
Many of the incentives for small businesses, entrepreneurship and research developments could easily have come from the mouth of a Conservative Chancellor. There are good reasons to be sceptical about whether such schemes boost the creation of firms or innovation, as opposed to the inventiveness of tax accountants. Mr Brown has also overhauled the tax, national insurance and social benefit systems to encourage people to take jobs and to show that work pays. These are admirable aims and these changes may have some effect at the margin. But there are dangers of exaggerating the impact of purely financial incentives on such decisions. Underlying attitudes to work and facilities like childcare also matter.

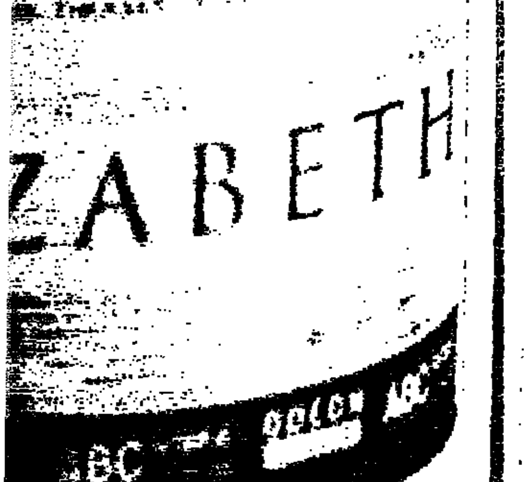
Both main parties nowadays compete to be pro-family and marriage. This can produce absurdities like turning the married couple's allowance into a totem of how pro-marriage you are. The fallacy of that was exposed by Mr Brown on Tuesday. But having sensibly abolished this allowance — as well as finally burying mortgage tax relief — Mr Brown felt obliged to invent a children's tax credit. This is supposed to focus support on children, though in classic Brown fashion it is being means-tested.

The overall pattern is of a complicated system of incentives and penalties to produce what the Government views as desirable behaviour — hard working, saving (though the Government has not been able to resist the soft target of savers), non-smoking, married couples with children, who form their own high-technology firms, own energy-efficient cars (or, better still, travel by public transport) and give to charities. The information and giving ages all rolled into one.

At the centre of this intricate pattern is Mr Brown himself, generating policy initiatives and controlling the levers of domestic policy throughout Whitehall. New Labour is now identical with the restless brain of the Chancellor.








هكذا من الأصل

British boxing fans take flight for big fight

By Adam Fresco and Elizabeth Judge

THE biggest contingent of British boxing fans to travel abroad will start arriving in New York today to back Lennox Lewis as he battles to become the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world.

At least 8,000 fans, enough to fill 19 jumbo jets, will be making the trek to America hoping to see Lewis, the WBC champion, beat Evander Holyfield, the WBA and IBF title holder. More than 1,000 more fans are expected to turn up without tickets hoping to buy from touts at heavily inflated prices.

Tickets for the event at Madison Square Garden, which holds just under 20,000 people, are selling for up to six times their face value of about £60 to more than £900. The cheaper seats sold out within half an hour of going on sale.

A spokesman for boxing's most famous venue, said: "We expect upwards of 8,000 British fans to be in The Garden on the night, making the atmosphere electric."

A spokesman for US Airtours, which has arranged flights and tickets for 300 people, said there was unprecedented demand for a boxing match abroad involving a Briton. He said: "Most of the airlines have been sold out for days. Many fans have said they are going without tickets, hoping to buy once out there."

They are travelling in the hope of seeing the first Briton to become the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world since 1897, when Bob Fitzsimmons won the title. Since then 12 Britons have tried. The last was Frank Bruno in 1989: he was beaten by Mike Tyson.

Adam Cornwell, 25, who works for an IT recruitment firm in London, is going to see the fight with four friends, each spending £1,000 on flights, tickets and accommodation. He said: "It is a lot of money, but it is a once-in-a-lifetime event. It is unlikely that I will get another chance to see a British heavyweight challenge for the title at Madison Square Garden and the whole weekend will be brilliant."



Lewis: hoping for lucky thirteenth attempt

Peter Stockton, 37, a commercial manager of a cable manufacturing company in Liverpool, is travelling with seven friends. He is missing the christening of his sister's baby to go to the fight, his first one abroad.

He is using savings for spending money while he is out there and confesses that he has lied to his wife about the cost of the fight ticket. He said: "She thinks it cost about £30. If she knew how much it really cost I wouldn't have to go all the way to New York for the big fight."

He had been expecting to stay in a small hotel or a youth hostel, but the travel company he booked with made a mistake and as a result it is paying for all of the group to stay in the Marriott Hotel in Times Square.

Lynne Truss, and Lewis tipped, page 49



WERNER FORMAN ARCHIVE

The Mayan king Hanab Pakal: mystery over his age at death may now be resolved

New bone test adds years to our ancestors

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

LIFE in olden times may have been nasty and brutish, but it was not necessarily short, a group of archaeologists says.

Mark Pollard, of Bradford University, with Robert Aykroyd, of the University of Leeds, and two colleagues from Bradford, has re-examined the methods used by archaeologists to calculate age at death from skeletal and dental remains. These methods, they told *New Scientist*, systematically underestimate how long people lived. "This explains a lot of things," he says. "For example, skeletons suggest that life expectancy in Ancient Rome was less than 50, while documentary evidence shows that lots of Romans lived to be 70 or more."

Other studies have suggested that Stone Age people on Orkney had an average age at death of only 25, with few surviving beyond 50, while Native Americans living in what is now Ohio 1,000 years ago had a life expectancy at birth of only 20, with a mere 10 to 15 per cent surviving beyond 40.

Norman Hammond, *The Times*'s archaeology correspondent, cites the example of the 7th-century Mayan king Hanab Pakal. From his bones, anthropologists in the 1950s concluded that he died in his forties, while the inscription on his tomb, translated later, says that he lived to be 80. "What the research has done is to show that the inscription can be reconciled with the bones," he says.

Archaeologists use evidence of wear and tear to estimate the age at death of human skeletons. From skeletons of known age, plots are produced linking age to specific levels of deterioration.

The results, however, have been increasingly questioned. When the vaults of Spitalfields Church in East London were excavated a few years ago, known ages of skeletons were compared with estimates worked out "blind" using the usual methods. The discrepancies were large.

The reason, says the team, is that the calculations contain a systematic bias. Linear regression, as the method used is called, involves taking bones of known ages and plotting a graph of how some characteristics, such as joint wear, change with time.

A line drawn through the points is used to calculate the age of other bones. But the team shows that the method is very rough. By using a different type of analysis, called a Bayesian calibration, the errors can be more than halved.

Professor Pollard said that the findings might imply that our ancestors had a more supportive social structure and more effective medicine than is usually thought, although he added that it may perhaps just have been a few people who lived to a great age.

Mother fights to keep son alive

By Michael Horsnell

A MOTHER who refused to give doctors permission to let her son die faces a second battle for his life today. Health officials who are reluctant to fund vital treatment are meeting to reassess the case.

Teresa Dygas said that Gregory, 17, who slipped into a coma during an asthma attack last April and suffered two cardiac arrests, has made remarkable progress since receiving treatment in the past four months at a unit dealing with traumatic brain injury.

He is now semi-conscious after hospital doctors initially said that he was brain dead. They told his mother that they would not attempt further resuscitation or treatment and tried to persuade her to "let him go" because it was "cruel to keep him alive".

Mrs Dygas, 48, fought off the suggestion as Gregory was moved from hospital to hospital. Lincolnshire Health Authority wanted to put him in a nursing home. But Mrs Dygas, who described such a move as a death sentence, persuaded officials to send him for assessment to the Holly Lodge unit near Sheffield.

Now she is afraid that the health authority will decide at a multidisciplinary panel today to stop paying for the £1,400-a-week treatment and to send him to a nursing home for palliative care only, where she believes that he would deteriorate and die.

Mrs Dygas, from Louth, who has two other children, Gregory's twin sister Isabel and Roger, 9, said: "We are living on our nerves, wondering when they will stop funding the treatment."

The case will help to focus the debate by the ethics committee of the British Medical Association, which plans to publish guidelines in July on the issue of withholding care from patients. The Tory MP Sir Teddy Taylor has tabled an early day motion calling on the Government to make illegal what he describes as "involuntary euthanasia".

Shrimps blinded by science

By Our Science Editor

SHRIMPS living at the bottom of the Atlantic are having their eyes destroyed by the bright lights of submersibles as scientists explore the last untouched wilderness on Earth, according to British biologists.

Peter Herring, of Southampton Oceanography Centre, and two colleagues from Leicester University, Edward Gaten and Peter Shelton, collected shrimps from two sites along the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.

At these sites, where the plates making up the Atlantic floor are separating, material from sub-sea volcanoes is constantly appearing through vents in the seabed. The result is a rich habitat for creatures that are adapted to it. The shrimps' eyes are adapted to the dim light.

Some of the shrimps collected have eyes that are completely white, instead of the normal pink, and appear to have suffered serious damage to the retina. The team suggests in *Nature* that previous visits to the site by the submersibles *Nautile* and *Alvin*, which used floodlights, may have caused the damage.

When shrimps of the same species are caught by trawlers well above the level of the vents, they show no such damage. The team cautions that any observations made about the behaviour of shrimps at the vents should take into account the fact that they have probably been blinded.

"There is at present no means of working at the vents without causing this damage, so every vent population visited will already have been exposed to it," they conclude.

☐ Scientists in the United States have identified a gene that enables mice to eat a high-fat diet without putting on weight, a report in *Nature* says. The mice, which have a defective version of the gene, remain a healthy weight whether they eat a high-fat or a low-fat diet with the same amount of calories.

The team, from Millennium Pharmaceuticals in Cambridge, Massachusetts, expect to find the same gene operates in humans. If so, it might provide the route to a new type of anti-obesity drug that would affect the operation of the gene.

Harare arrests three in US arms mystery

From Jan Raath
in Harare

ZIMBABWEAN authorities are holding three Americans who allegedly tried to smuggle weapons on to a flight from Harare to Zurich after visiting the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The state-controlled *Herald* reported yesterday that a team of investigators had flown to the Congo to investigate the men's activities there. Security officials were alerted when one of them tried to pass through an airport metal detector on Sunday night carrying a handgun. Their luggage, containing stripped rifles, telescopic sights and ammunition, had already passed through security checks.

In the airport car park police discovered a large four-wheel-drive vehicle, said to belong to the three and containing a small arsenal concealed behind secret panels and inside fridges and washing machines. It included automatic rifles, sniper rifles, silencers, infra-red sights, a light machinegun, pistols, shotguns, ammunition, mobile radio equipment, binoculars and as many as 70 knives.

Four days after their arrest, there has been no explanation by authorities. The only identification offered by police is that they are men in their thirties who are directors of an Indianapolis business with the name of the John Dixon Window Cleaning Company.

Police have failed to observe the law that obliges them to produce any suspect in court 48 hours after they are arrested. "They are in unlawful custody now," said a senior lawyer. "There is no way that period can be legally extended."

The American Embassy's only response was to deny that the three were linked in any way to the US Government. Diplomatic sources said that the men had invoked American privacy legislation that prevents their being publicly identified by US officials. The sources said that Zimbabwean authorities were being "very co-operative".

Congo expels diplomat and seizes Britons

Envoy accused of spying after embassy team is arrested, Sam Kiley reports

A BRITISH diplomat was yesterday accused of spying and expelled from the Democratic Republic of Congo as Foreign Office officials continued to negotiate for the release of four Britons and an American held since Sunday in Kinshasa, also accused of espionage.

Gregor Lusty, Third Secretary at the British Embassy in the former Zaire, was escorting a team of British soldiers and diplomats on a "routine" tour of the country's capital, as part of contingency planning for the evacuation of about 200 British citizens living there.

They were arrested near the international airport by soldiers manning roadblocks. According to the Congolese authorities, they were found carrying maps with the city's airports and other strategic installations highlighted. They have been held under "hotel arrest" while British colleagues tried to persuade Congolese officials that they were not spying.

Mr Lusty was not ordered to remain in his hotel under guard along with his colleagues because he had diplomatic immunity. But yesterday he was ordered out of the country by Gaetan Kakudji, the Interior Minister.

"A diplomat who was the guide in all of this, we have pronounced him persona non grata," he said. "He must leave the country today. I delivered the message to the British Ambassador. This is a situation which they have provoked. In any country this would be espionage."

A British consular official, two Ministry of Defence officials, one of the British Ambassador's bodyguards, a member of the Royal Military Police close protection squad, and an American on attachment to the Foreign Office, were still being held in a Kinshasa hotel last night.

Late on Tuesday night Tony Lloyd, the Foreign Office Minister responsible for Africa, called Laurent Kabila, President of the Congo, to ask for the release of the five men. "We totally reject allegations that they were spying or were involved in any spying activities," he said. "What they were doing was reviewing standard plans for consular and embassy evacuation in the event of an emergency in Kinshasa."

A Foreign Office spokesman said yesterday that "there are some hopes that they will be released soon". The spokesman said the treatment of the MoD and Foreign Office officials was "unhelpful, unwarranted and unnecessary".

Four of the men being held in Kinshasa had flown to the capital on diplomatic visas. Foreign Office sources said they were unlikely to be covered by diplomatic immunity. The fifth member of the group, the ambassador's bodyguard, was also on a diplomatic visa but is based in Kinshasa.

The two MoD men were thought to be officers from Britain's Rapid Reaction Force which would be responsible for evacuating British nationals from the Democratic Republic of Congo if they were considered to be in danger. Defence sources dismissed suggestions that they were members of the special forces.

Douglas Scrafton, the British Ambassador, was allowed to visit the men and he told the Foreign Office they were in good health and had been well treated.

Given the levels of tension in Kinshasa, which came close to falling to rebels last year in a war that has drawn in eight other countries amid reports of white mercenaries working on both sides, the British soldiers and others were lucky they were not beaten, or worse. Westerners visiting Kinshasa are routinely thrashed and threatened with mock executions and have their wallets emptied by local security force troops.

Britain and America are suspected by Congolese officials of supporting the country's Tutsi-led rebels.


Védrine: has taken over from "French Cell"


REUTERS

The body of Ala al-Hams is carried through the streets of Rafah, hours after he was shot by Palestinian police

Arafat returns to quell Gaza violence

From Christopher Walker
in Jerusalem

YASSIR ARAFAT, the Palestinian leader, yesterday cut short a trip to Jordan and flew back to Gaza to handle security after rioting erupted in which his security forces fired on demonstrators, killing two teenagers and wounding six others.

According to witnesses in the town of Rafah, close to the Egyptian border, one Palestinian policeman was also injured in exchanges of fire between police and armed protesters, many of them supporters of the militant Islamic group, Hamas.

The violence, the worst seen between Palestinians in the area for months, resulted from public fury over news that a Palestinian military court had sentenced a security agent and former Hamas activist to death by firing squad for the killing of Refat Jouda, an officer belonging to a rival agency.

Two other Hamas sympathisers were sentenced by the court, one to 15 years and the other to life imprisonment in a disputed verdict that fuelled allegations that Mr Arafat was presiding over justice more arbitrary and brutal than that previously administered by the Israelis, who ruled the area until 1994.

As the condemned man, Raed al-Attar, 25, was led away by police after sentencing, he shouted: "There is no justice in Palestine. This court decision has been fabricated." It was not clear when the sentence would be carried out.

The case against him underscored the difficulties of controlling rival security branches without clear mandates and illustrated the friction between clan justice and the rule of Mr Arafat's embryonic Palestinian Authority.

After the verdict, shops in Rafah closed in solidarity with the three men and demonstrators hurled rocks and bottles at the Jouda family house.

Ala al-Hams, 18, who was killed by police in the ensuing violence, was swiftly buried in the Muslim fashion. Family members at the emotional funeral chanted: "Keep your dogs away from us, Arafat" — a reference to the Palestinian police, who then imposed a curfew.

Cook embarrassed on eve of Anglo-French tour

By Sam Kiley
Africa Correspondent

THE Kinshasa arrests are an embarrassing blow to Anglo-French plans to forge a joint policy on Africa. They will confirm in the minds of many French officials that Britain is playing dirty on the dark continent.

Whatever the intentions of Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and Hubert Védrine, his French counterpart — who were due to meet for dinner in Ghana yesterday at the start of an historic joint tour of West Africa — British officials will be blushing in the face of private taunts from the French that they were right all along. Since Uganda and Rwanda backed English-speaking Tutsis to topple Mobutu Sese Seko in the then Zaire two years ago, French official have insisted that they did so with the help of British and American spy agencies.

"It is all the work of the Defence Intelligence Agency [the Pentagon's espionage network] and MI6. The Brits come up with the ideas and the Americans with the funding," an African-based French official insisted as the rebels drove Mobutu from his marbled palaces.

France has been proven beyond any question to have supplied arms to Hutu extremists before, during and after the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 — further entrenching the perception that, far from having a joint policy in Africa, London and Paris were bitterly at odds.

M Védrine has gone to some lengths to wrest control of Africa's policy from an exclusive "French Cell" based in the Elysée Palace, which ruthlessly pursued French interests in Africa during the Mitterrand presidency.

M Chirac has been happy to see the Quai d'Orsay sideline the French cell, partly as a result of the exposure of the extent of French support for the Hutus during the genocide.

But many French officials still resent deeply what they saw as Anglophone interference in the Congo and are quick to point out that America has deployed Green Berets to train Tutsis in Rwanda while, until recently, Britain had a military training team in Uganda.

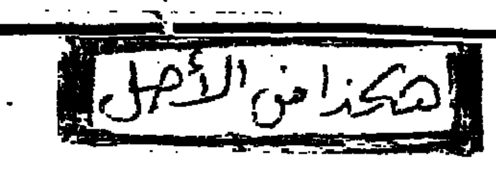
Others go further in their suspicions. A member of the 11th "Shock" regiment — the military wing of the French spy agency, the DGSE — once claimed to have killed a British SAS soldier serving with the Tutsis in Rwanda in 1991. "I shot him dead in the north of the country. The SAS were training the Tutsis, definitely, that's why they're so good in the jungle," he insisted.

The French and British Foreign Ministers are anxious to put such rivalries behind them and make good on their leader's commitments at the Franco-British summit in December to share information and even embassies in Africa.

The two ministers will meet Ghana's President Rawlings today.







هكذا من الأصل



Veteran car boss peddles battery bike

Lee Iacocca invests millions to get Americans into saddle, says Giles Whittell

AFTER decades as a cheerleader for America's gas-guzzling car culture, Lee Iacocca, the former Chrysler chairman, has abandoned his retirement and sunk several million of his own dollars into a scheme to sell 1,000 electric bicycles a week to pensioners, police officers and anyone else with a dread of pedalling uphill.

At $995 (£610) for the basic model, the E-bike is not cheap, but neither is it purely for fun. And it should turn heads. It can outpace joggers and most urban traffic, purr along on cruise control and recharge in a few hours at any electric socket. But when *The Times* tested one, it proved too quiet to be noticed by the citizens of west Los Angeles, or simply too modest.

A 24-volt battery under the crossbar gives this hybrid brisk acceleration and a range of 20 miles at 15mph if not pedalled at all. With a determined athlete in the saddle, its range is limitless and mountain-bike gears are designed to make light work of pedalling a 65lb machine, roughly twice the weight of a typical bicycle.

Mr Iacocca has said modestly: "This isn't just a bicycle: it's a revolution."

But with the sedate lines of a women's shopper, it may struggle to ignite a craze in the land of stretch limousines.

Electric transport so far has been a dud in the United States. Thomas Edison, inventor of the lightbulb, assured Henry Ford nearly a century ago that the days of the internal combustion engine were numbered. Since then, despite choking smog and traffic jams, electric trolley buses have been removed from Los Angeles streets and battery problems have made electric cars a plaything of hobbyists and the rich.

Two years ago General Motors launched its EV-1, America's first battery-powered production car. It has since leased barely 400 of them, echoing Sir Clive Sinclair's heroic failure with the C-5, a low-slung pod that positioned its rider on the level of other vehicles' exhaust pipes.



Lee Iacocca pedals his "revolutionary" electric cycle

"In Asia and Europe the bicycle is part of the culture," Bill Moore, editor of *EV World* magazine, said. "Over here it's an exercise phenomenon. It's going to take a cultural shift to get people to start using it instead of their beloved four-wheel-drives to go to the barber's shop."

Mr Iacocca, 73, has led cultural shifts before and is the original celebrity industrialist. When Bill Gates was nine, Mr Iacocca appeared on the cover of *Newsweek* next to the first Ford Mustang, a chrome and steel paean to American manhood that was an instant hit. He went on to become chief executive of Ford, the rescuer (twice) of Chrysler and the author of an autobiography that sold nine million copies.

His Midas touch has not been infallible. He joined the reclusive billionaire Kirk Kirkorian in a doomed attempt to buy Chrysler after retiring from it in 1992, and lent his name in 1995 to a low-fat butter substitute that failed to sell. With the E-bike, he may be on safer ground. It is being sold only through car dealerships, where his name recalls a golden age, and only in four warm states: California, Arizona, Florida and Hawaii. It is also being aimed at military bases, universities and retirement communities. California and Florida alone have 14,000 of them.

Hopes are high in the Los Angeles offices of Mr Iacocca's grandly named company, EV Global Motors. "We are going to electrify the Bahamas," said Irene DiVito, vice-president of corporate communications, brandishing an order for 50 E-bikes from the Bahamian police force.

They may yet change the mainland, too. Pollution, global warming and time wasted in traffic jams have brought redoubled government efforts to wean Americans off petrol and out of cars. With tough new air-quality regulations on his side, Mr Iacocca aims to profit from a solution to a problem that he admits he helped to create. "I think I have one vision left in me before I die," he told *Time* magazine recently. "And it's electric."

There are other electric bikes on the market, but none have Mr Iacocca's name recognition and all live in the shadow of ghosts that came and went. Several small-town Californian police forces use "Electricruisers" for their street patrols, sold for less than $1,000 by ZAP Power Systems of San Francisco. Charger Bicycles and the Electric Transportation Company have more expensive models; Canada's Malcolm Bricklin is not so lucky. His $2,000 EV Warrior electric bicycle venture, offering "the commuter vehicle of the future", went bankrupt two years ago.



Chryler's future chairman with his tricycle as a boy

North Korean farce ends in asylum bid

FROM DAVID WATTS IN KUALA LUMPUR

A NORTH KOREAN diplomat sought asylum in Thailand last night after a vanload of his felow envoys tried to kidnap himand return him to Pyongyang.

Hong Sun Gyong and his wife were flown to the Thai capital after a comedy of errors in which local police at one point lost the couple, having apparently rescued them from a group of North Korean diplomats who were standing near an overturned van.

It is believed that the van crashed 280 miles northeast of Bangkok as the diplomats were trying to smuggle the couple out of Thailand to Laos, from where they were to be taken to Pyongyang. The couple had cuts and bruises as a result of the accident.

Mr Hong, the Science and Technology Attaché, went missing in the middle of last month. The North Koreans accused him of embezzling money that was to be used to buy rice from Thailand.

Last night Surin Pitsuwan, the Thai Foreign Minister, confirmed that Mr Hong had requested asylum and said that Thailand would protect him. Thailand has no extradition treaty with North Korea.

The North Korean Ambassador to Thailand has not returned to Bangkok since the scandal broke.

Three die in Spice Isles riots

Jakarta: At least three people were killed and 50 hurt when Indonesian troops opened fire to break up mobs of Christians and Muslims clashing in Ambon, in the Spice Islands (Patricia Nunan writes).

Tens of thousands of Muslims and Christians fought with petrol bombs, machetes, knives and at least one bow and arrow. Several houses were set on fire.

More than 200 people have been killed in Ambon since late January, when an argument between a Muslim and a Christian over a bus fare led to rioting. Many deaths have been caused by Indonesian security forces: they are authorised to shoot rioters on sight.

The Government has sent more than 3,000 troops into Ambon to maintain stability.

In the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, more than 1,000 students took to the streets calling for a holy war to avenge the deaths of Ambonese Muslims.

"This is not about war," Irwan Senarnya said. "We just want to show the world that we Muslim people always suffer from Christians."

Most of Indonesia's 200 million people are Muslim, but the Spice Islands are predominantly Christian.

Terrified villagers surrender after Serb onslaught



Anthony Loyd reports from the deserted village of Ivaja in Kosovo, razed to the ground by troops bent on revenge



ATTILA KISBENEDEK / EPA

Ethnic Albanian refugees, including young and old people, make their way to the foot of the mountains near Kacanik after being driven from their homes by Serbian forces

THERE were only two men visible among the smouldering ruins of Ivaja yesterday. They were all that remained of the 500-strong ethnic Albanian population of the village, perched in the mountains 31 miles south of Pristina, after Serb tanks and mortars pulverised it a day earlier, before infantry moved in and set light to whatever remained.

One of the two, Ramadan Muljoqi, 84, sat dazed among the smoking devastation. His face bruised and puffed by repeated beating, he had fled his home when the Serb attack began. Separated from his family in the confusion, and without enough strength to escape across the mountains alone, he returned to Ivaja late on Tuesday afternoon when the shelling had stopped.

"The Serb soldiers beat me with their rifles," he said, holding out bloody and swollen fingers as behind him wild-eyed dogs devoured a horse, one of many animals slaughtered in the tank-churned streets. "They asked me who I knew from the KLA [Kosovo Liberation Army]. I said no one. 'What of my son?' they asked. I said he wasn't in the KLA. So they beat me again."

The other man was anonymous in death. In his twenties, possibly KLA, he lay sprawled at the edge of the village, shot twice in the chest, palms open and fingers outstretched, a watch still ticking on his wrist. Two bullet casings lay by the pool of blood at his feet as well as a fresh cigarette end. So we know little of his death other than that he was a Serb soldier who smoked.

Mr Muljoqi did not know the corpse's identity either. But he said that he had seen him being beaten, then shot.

Ivaja was one of five Albanian villages hit by a co-ordinated Serb attack early this week that has displaced more than 4,000 refugees. Occupying the greatest altitude of the five, nearly a mile above sealevel, and suffering the worst damage, it was once headquarters of a small KLA unit.

Ten days ago a Serb police captain was killed in an ambush outside Gjare, the next village down. Gjare was attacked immediately by the Serbs, its 350 civilians taking refuge in a ravine. Observers noted that it would need more than this token attack to quell the Serbs' anger at their loss.

The past few days have been a time of intense Western pressure on all participants in Kosovo's conflict. Their energies may have slowed the tread of the Yugoslav state's vengeance, but when it came it was no less cruel, and its step was unfaltering.

"The fighting started on Tuesday morning as Serb army and police units tried to clean the area of KLA," said Otto Bischof, a monitor with the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), who arrived to survey the devastation in Ivaja. "You can see the operation was successful," he said sarcastically. "There was no need to destroy all the houses with mortars. It was a job you could have done with infantry alone."

Eighty per cent of the village was little more than rubble, any surviving houses destroyed by flame. The mosque had been raked with anti-aircraft fire and vandalised. Crucially the village's registration office, repository of the birth certificates and identity papers needed by Albanians to exist as Yugoslav citizens, had been ransacked. The village was silent.

Deprived of their homes, livelihood, and bureaucratic identity, 420 of Ivaja's people handed themselves over to the Serbs at Kacanik at the foot of the mountain range on Tuesday afternoon. They were exhausted and terrified, their fears not allayed when Serb police seperated the men from the women and children. The latter were sent away from the town to fend for themselves, while the 139 men were herded into police lorries for interrogation in Kacanik. Despite soiling their reputation with a pattern of atrocity and human rights abuses, Serb security forces operate with impunity, regardless of Western threats.

Indeed, so far the Westerners in Kosovo, to date mainly OSCE monitors and staff representing the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), seem little more than waiters come to collect the bill. They are barely able to move at times, let alone fulfil their mission.

10 miles
Pristina
Pec
KOSOVO
Kacanik
ALBANIA
Prizren
Ivaja
Former Yugoslav Republic of MACEDONIA

"We tried five different routes to reach Ivaja during the fighting," said a UNHCR officer, Paula Ghedini, as the organisation tried to arrange the evacuation of refugees in Kotlina, displaced by the same Serb offensive that destroyed Ivaja. "The Serbs blocked our access to each one. The populations of five villages, as many as 4,000 people, are trapped in the woods and mountains. They cannot escape and they cannot return home. Some have been on the move for the past three to four days, some for as long as two weeks. We can't even find them as we have such limited access."

Milosevic told 'no immunity'

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE EDITOR

PRESIDENT MILOSEVIC was offered no concessions yesterday when confronted by American envoys seeking to persuade the Yugoslav leader to sign a Kosovo peace settlement, US officials said.

Richard Holbrooke, the American envoy for the Balkans, and Christopher Hill, the chief Kosovo mediator, began talks in Belgrade with Mr Milosevic, less than a week before peace negotiations resume in France.

Although there was no apparent breakthrough after the first session, US officials emphasised that "no carrots" were being offered to Mr Milosevic.

There was no question, they said, of offering him immunity from prosecution for war crimes, should he be indicted. Nor was he going to be guaranteed that sanctions against Yugoslavia would be lifted if he signed a peace settlement.

Meanwhile, two men from the King's Own Border Regiment were injured in a fight between 20 soldiers and waiters at a Macedonian restaurant in Skopje, the Ministry of Defence said yesterday.

Austrian bomber sent to asylum

FROM NIGEL GLASS
IN VIENNA

THE founder and sole member of the Bavarian Liberation Army was committed to a mental institution for life yesterday by the criminal court in Graz, Austria, on charges that included the murder of four gypsies. Passing sentence on Franz Fuchs, 49, Judge Heinz Fuhrmann cited the racial nature of the crimes.

All of the attacks, which started in 1993, were made with boobytrap or letter bombs. The most serious attack was with a bomb planted near the home of gypsies in Burgenland. The bomb detonated when the residents tried to remove an anti-gypsy message. The blast killed four men.

Other victims included a policeman, who lost both hands while attempting to scan a letter bomb, and a refuse worker who suffered the same fate when he touched a boobytrapped package that had been left outside a Vienna school for foreign students.

All the bombs were aimed directly at foreigners or minority groups or at those who supported their integration into Austrian society, including the former Mayor of Vienna, Helmut Zilk, who lost part of a hand.

Fuchs lost both lower arms when he set off a bomb he was carrying at the time of his arrest, in what appears to have been an attempt at suicide.

The trial provided a macabre spectacle as Fuchs, who had adopted a Hitler moustache and haircut, repeatedly broke into anti-foreigner rhetoric including "flood of foreigners, blood of foreigners", while waving his truncated limbs within the sleeves of his pullover. His outbursts resulted in his removal to the cells for a large part of the trial.

The court rejected the defence's contention that Fuchs acted as part of a wider group. The prosecution produced forensic science and other evidence to show that the explosive devices were linked to Fuchs personally.



Athena Onassis with her father Thierry Roussel

Trust is removed from managing Onassis fortune

FROM JOHN CARR IN ATHENS

A FORTUNE conservatively estimated at £500 million — what remains of the legendary Onassis shipping fortune — is in the hands of auditors after Swiss authorities ruled that its Greek administrators could no longer control the account.

The heiress to the money is Athena Roussel, the 14-year-old grand-daughter of the late Aristotle Onassis. According to a local Swiss guardianship authority, she has "a conflict of interest" with the Athens-based Onassis Foundation that had the task of administering the fortune.

In reaching its decision, the Upper Engadine Guardianship Authority, a non-judicial body, faulted the foundation for hiring agents to spy on Athena and her French father, Thierry Roussel, at their Swiss home last year. It cited a statement by Athena saying she "does not want to have any relationship with the Greek members of the board".

Stelios Papadimitriou, the president of the foundation, was angry about the decision yesterday. "This is ludicrous," he said. Lawyers have been told to contest the Swiss authority's decision.

Mr Papadimitriou and other board members of the foundation remain convinced, and have said so publicly, that M Roussel's aim is to seize control of his daughter's money.



Papadimitriou: fuming at decision by the Swiss

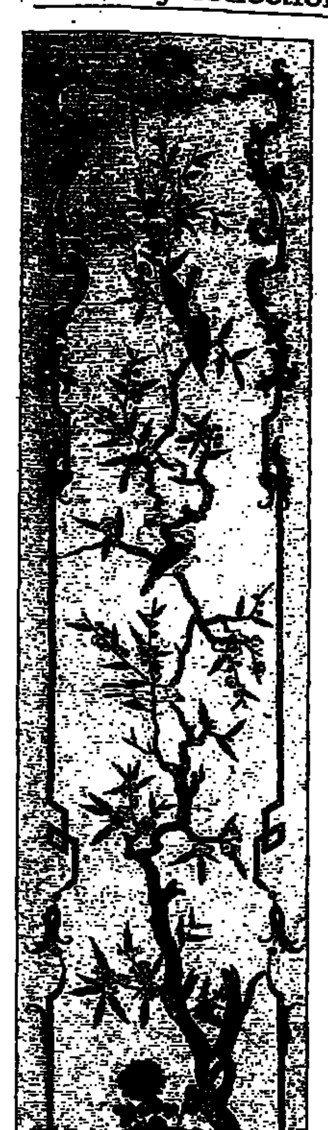
Last year, acting on suspicion that M Roussel was raising Athena in ways that would lead her to forget her Greek roots, the foundation hired agents to spy on the Swiss household. The attempt backfired when several people were arrested.

The Onassis fortune is now in the hands of KPMG Fides, a Lucerne-based auditing company. Mr Papadimitriou said that in one respect he was satisfied that M Roussel was excluded from any role in administering the fortune. He added that in her will, drawn up shortly before her death in 1988, Christina Onassis had stipulated that M Roussel should be excluded from any part in administering the Onassis family fortune.



Police protest delays sale of Italian royal antiques

Richard Owen reports on last-minute action as House of Savoy collection goes under the hammer in London



One of a fine set of six Italian painted panels

SOTHEBY'S was forced yesterday to freeze the sale of valuable 18th-century antiques from the collection of the former Italian Royal Family, the House of Savoy, after Italian authorities intervened to object that they were part of the country's heritage.

General Roberto Conforti, head of the carabinieri anti-art theft unit, who had asked the auction house to withdraw 24 lots of "exceptional value to the state", later agreed the sale could go ahead, subject to a 35-day "review" by Italian police of the export procedures involved. He said that if, at the end of that period, the Italian authorities were able to prove that items had been "improperly" exported, the sale would be declared invalid.

A notice was read to prospective buyers at the sale, in English and Italian, warning that selected pieces would not be released for 35 days, adding: "We are confident that the licences are in order."

Robin Woodhead, chief executive of Sotheby's Europe, was "amazed that the Italians should have raised objections at the last moment ... We have been discussing this with them since the sale was announced last November."

A Sotheby's spokesman said all the artefacts involved, including mirrors, inlaid tables and cabinets valued at up to £100,000 each, had "legally obtained export licences". He emphasised that the proceeds of the sale — which involved about 1,400 lots — were going to Italian charities set up to give jobs to the young, including a church-run school for furniture restoration.

But General Conforti said that the furniture amounted to a collection "of the highest national importance". Italian police said the disputed items had been presented individually for export in provincial centres such as Bologna, Genoa and Turin, the former seat of the House of Savoy, which ruled Italy from unification in 1870 until 1946. "If the items had been presented as a collection, and not broken up in this way, the export would almost certainly have been blocked," *La Repubblica* said.

Mr Woodhead said the antiques were a "dealer's collection, not a national collection", and that the Italian Fine Arts authorities in the various towns involved had co-ordinated with each other. "There were 41 rooms of furniture, including French and German items as well as Italian ones." He said that there was "no judicial reason" to stop the sale, adding: "We have instructions from a client with full title, and have acted within the law. But we are sensitive to the Italian authorities, and so agreed to a 35-day moratorium."

Giovanna Melandri, the Minister of Culture, said investigations were continuing, adding: "I am pleased that General Conforti took timely action." The general said that Sotheby's had shown the "sensitivity and respect towards Italy's heritage we expect from a serious auction house".

The collection was assembled by Giuseppe Rossi, a leading Turin antiques dealer who was close to the former Royal Family. He bought some items from former King Umberto, who lived in exile at Cascais in Portugal, and acquired others at auctions. He died ten years ago, and his property, including the royal antiques, passed to his sister, Maria Luisa Rossi, now 80, who decided to sell.

King Umberto II, the last monarch of the House of Savoy, left Italy in 1946 after a referendum that narrowly abolished the monarchy and founded the Italian Republic.

Under the Italian Constitution, male members of the House of Savoy are barred from returning to Italy. But Prince Victor Emmanuel, the son of the last king, who lives in exile in Switzerland, has petitioned parliament to be allowed to return, provided he and his family do not seek to regain former royal properties or engage in politics. Most former Savoy palaces are now public musuems.

General Conforti said that he had acted after Giovanni Nuzzo, the deputy prosecutor in Cremona, opened an investigation into the way that the export licences were obtained, and after a number of MPs, including Furio Colombo and Raffale Costa, both MPs for Piedmont, and Vittorio Sgarbi,



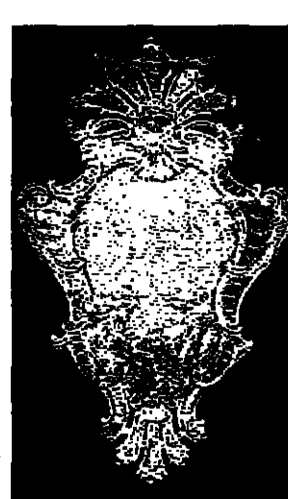
An ivory-inlaid detail from a 1720s bureau by Luigi Prinotto which went on sale

an independent MP and noted fine arts authority, had asked Signora Melandri to intervene. *Panorama*, an Italian news magazine, said that the furniture and art objects formed "the most important collection of Italian antiques to be sold abroad this century".

Carla Enrica Spantigati, *Superintendent of Fine Arts in* Turin, said that the collection "should have stayed in Turin ... We have made enormous efforts to restore Savoy palaces and track down furniture and objects of art with which to furnish them. I am very alarmed at the way this was done."

Sotheby's said the sale had been a "huge success", raising millions of pounds. The disputed items all sold for at least double their estimate. They include a tulipwood table inlaid with ivory by Pietro Piffetti, which fetched £342,000; an ornate gilded mirror by Giuseppe Bonzanigo, which went for £166,500; a commode, by Bonzanigo, sold for £188,500; and a tulipwood and gilt cabinet by Galletti, fetched £34,500. Many of the pieces carry the Savoy coat of arms.

Last month Gianni Agnelli, the powerful head of Fiat, who is an international consultant on the board of Sotheby's, held a dinner at an exclusive Turin club for Signora Rossi, the Mayor of Turin, and leading Italian dealers and collectors to underline the importance of the collection and the philanthropic aims of the sale.



One of a pair of carved gilt girandoles

The tulipwood table by Piffetti fetched £342,000

Angry Belgians seek to build 'Francophonia'

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

IT SOUNDS like something from the Marx Brothers, but the European Union could find itself early in the next century with a new member state at its heart that goes by the name of Francophonia.

In the minds of outraged French-speaking politicians, this nation of five million people would be the logical conclusion of a push for separate powers this month by Flanders, the Dutch-speaking northern half of Belgium.

The push by the Flemish regional parliament has galvanised the country's French-speaking leaders into a rare united stand against what they see as a move to split Belgium into an independent Flanders and a French-speaking nation. Under President Van den Brande, the Flemings say that they are not seeking full independence but a "confederation of separate states" in which the concept of Belgium would fade away.

Especially galling for the French-speakers is Flanders's designs on Brussels, a Flanders enclave with 85 per cent French-speakers that is a separate region as well as national capital and de facto seat of the European Union.

The new Flemish scheme would bring Brussels under direct control by both French and Dutch speakers, but this is seen by French-speakers as a ploy leading to full Flemish control.

With Belgian general elections three months away, all the main parties in the Flemish parliament backed the demand for control over tax-raising and spending.

If granted, these powers would greatly extend the devolution that finished in 1993 with a complex federal structure made up of three regions — Flanders, French-speaking Wallonia, and Brussels — and three "language communities". These represent Dutch speakers, French speakers and the small minority of German speakers in the east of the country.

Stupefying in large quantities. Should not be used by pregnant women.

China tightens grip on Tibet

Communists still fear revolt 40 years after flight of the Dalai Lama, reports James Pringle from Beijing

WITH China's huge military garrison in Tibet on full alert yesterday, the fortieth anniversary of the bloody uprising that led to the Dalai Lama's flight into exile, the Tibetan spiritual leader said in India that Beijing had intensified the repression of his people and would not hold talks.

"A lack of political will and courage on the part of the Chinese leadership has resulted in their failure to reciprocate my numerous overtures," the 14th Dalai Lama told 4,000 Tibetans in Dharmsala, site of his government-in-exile.

As troops in riot gear guarded Lhasa's streets, security police on rooftops around the central Jokhang Temple watched pilgrims, turning prayer-wheels and murmuring mantras, quietly marking national uprising day. This was the occasion on March 10, 1959 when battles began that left thousands of Tibetans dead and resulted in the god king fleeing over the Himalayan passes.

In Beijing, a senior Tibetan official, Raidi, used the strident language of the Cultural Revolution to abuse the Dalai Lama: he was a "splittist" and a "loyal tool used by anti-China forces".

The *People's Daily* said that Tibetan society before Chinese intervention "was darker and more cruel than Europe's system of serfdom in the Middle Ages". The Communist Party newspaper added: "It can be said to have been one of the world's most serious violators of human rights.One Western diplomat in Beijing said: "Seldom has the outlook for the return of the Dalai Lama and the survival of Tibetan culture looked so bleak."

Indirect communication with Beijing broke down late last year at the same time as China's leaders, afraid of social unrest because of widespread job losses in the state sector, cracked down on Chinese political dissidents.

President Jiang Zemin had surprised critics last June during a visit to Beijing by President Clinton by offering talks with the Dalai Lama on condition that he recognised Tibet and Taiwan as parts of China.

> ‘Monks and nuns who shout slogans in praise of their exiled god king are tortured’

The Dalai Lama, the 1989 Nobel Peace laureate, said yesterday that he had requested a meeting with Beijing before responding to President Jiang's comments but was snubbed.

Observers note that he always speaks of autonomy, not independence, for Tibet, and advocates non-violence.

In Beijing an important exhibition shows the alleged benefits that the Tibetans have enjoyed since Chinese troops invaded the territory in 1950, and the official press is full of articles praising Communist Party rule in Tibet, without mentioning the destruction visited on Tibetan monasteries and religion during the Cultural Revolution.

When the Dalai Lama left with 80,000 followers for Dharmsala, a former British hill station, it was only to be a brief exile, they thought.

But 40 years on, the Dalai Lama remains in exile, looking ever less likely to return to his winter residence at the Potala, and to the 2.5 million Tibetans in what is now the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Yet if the 63-year-old spiritual leader did return he would scarcely recognise Lhasa; the capital, which, with the exception of an enclave around the Jokhang, looks like any other drab Chinese city.

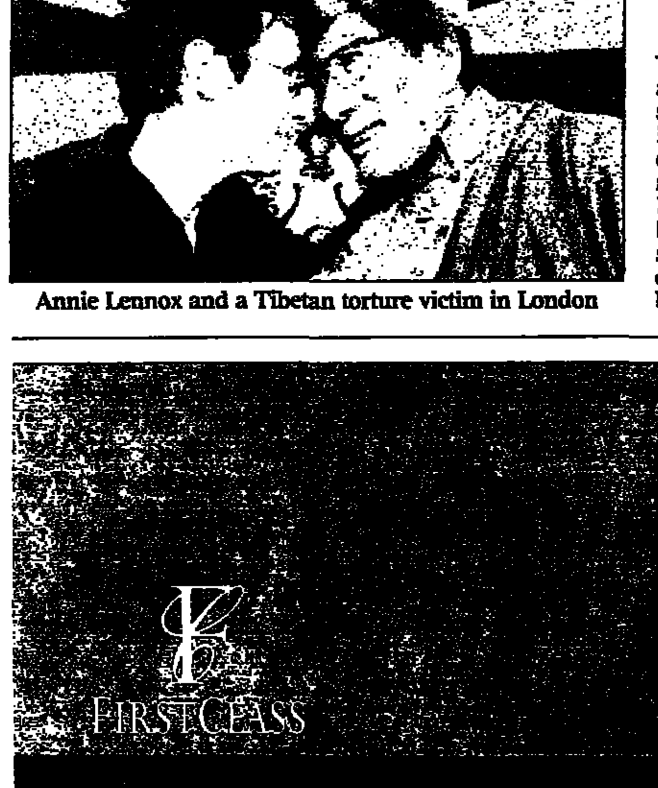
He has described what is happening as "some kind of cultural genocide".

About 100,000 ethnic Chinese have poured into Lhasa looking for a better life. For the first time, Lhasa has traffic jams as well as lurid advertising hoardings, tacky high-rise blocks and pollution.

The Chinese authorities control Lama Buddhism rigidly and crush any opposition. According to human rights groups, monks and nuns who shout slogans in praise of the Dalai Lama or independence are tortured.


SAURABH DAS / AP

The Dalai Lama at a ceremony in Dharmsala yesterday commemorating the revolt



Annie Lennox and a Tibetan torture victim in London

Hollywood crusaders join protest

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

TWELVE time zones from California, and travelling without the perquisites of stardom, Richard Gere and Goldie Hawn lent star power if not political clout to the gathering of Tibetan exiles in northern India. Mr Gere, a practising Buddhist and friend of the Dalai Lama, has become a regular visitor to Dharmsala on the anniversaries of the 1959 Tibetan uprising, not least because he is barred from Tibet itself. "The human rights situation is getting worse," the actor told one reporter. "The Chinese are carrying out a systematic genocide."

Such outspokenness has not endeared him to Beijing, which banned him from Tibet when its plight became Hollywood's most fashionable foreign policy crusade with the release of two major films two years ago. Harrison Ford and his wife, as well as Steven Seagal (who claims to be a reincarnation of a holy Tibetan icon), were among those denied visas to the remote country as Hollywood's interest rose to fever pitch with the making of *Seven Years in Tibet*, starring Brad Pitt, and Gere's *Red Corner*.

Ms Hawn, mingling at the gathering with Tibetans who had made the trans-Himalayan trek, said: "It breaks my heart that these gentle people have been the object of abuse."

LINKS

http://www.tibet.com/ — Government in exile.
http://www.tibet.org/SFT/march.html — Details of Tibetan uprising day.
http://www.savetibet.org/ — The International Campaign for Tibet website.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Libyans guilty of French bombing

Paris: Six Libyan intelligence agents, including the brother-in-law of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, were sentenced in absentia to life imprisonment (Susan Bell writes). A French anti-terrorism court found them guilty of the 1989 bombing of a French aircraft in which all 170 people on board, including four Britons, died.

France has issued international arrest warrants and will apply to Libya to impose the verdict on the six men — or face reinforced sanctions. The trial came as Colonel Gaddafi seemed set to hand over two Libyans to face charges in Europe in connection with the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am airliner over Lockerbie in Scotland in which 270 people died.

TV plea to Redgrave

Los Angeles: The estranged husband of Lynn Redgrave, the British-born actress, has made a television appeal for her to drop divorce proceedings and continue their 32-year marriage. "Look, I'm 66 years old. You [Redgrave] were 56 years old just yesterday, and I just think we're a little old for all this nonsense," John Clark, a director, said in a television interview. "So please, I love you. Settle down and lighten up." Ms Redgrave filed for divorce on March 1. *(Reuters)*

Antigua re-elects PM

St John's, Antigua: Car horns blared and supporters jumped for joy as Lester Bird, 61, whose party has dominated Antiguan politics for decades, won a convincing election victory and was returned as Prime Minister — despite charges of corruption. Mr Bird's Antigua Labour Party won 12 of 17 parliamentary seats in Tuesday's election, one more seat than it held in the previous Government. *(AP)*

Lusaka reporters held

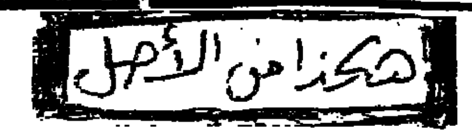
Harare: Four Zambian journalists were arrested, a fifth is on the run and a sixth was refusing to allow police to enter his home as President Chiluba's Government cracked down on "unpatriotic" press (Jan Raath writes). All are reporters on the independent daily *Post*, which said that Zambia's ill-equipped army of 20,000 could be easily crushed by a 10,000-strong division from neighbouring Angola.

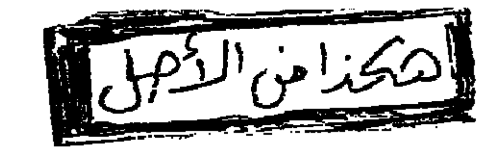
Meteorite from Mars

Scientists have identified a new meteorite from Mars after an anonymous donor handed it in to a museum in Italy (Nicholas Booth writes). It is the fourteenth known fragment of the Red Planet to be identified after landing on Earth. The sample, the size of a coconut and weighing about 5lb, was found in the Libyan Desert near Dar al Gani in the Sahara.

Back to the USSR

Moscow: Russia's Communist and nationalist-dominated parliament voted overwhelmingly to reintroduce the Soviet anthem — but without lyrics. The provisional anthem will stay wordless while poets struggle to find the sentiments to fit the melody. Bringing back the Soviet-era tune would have to be approved by President Yeltsin, seen as unlikely. *(AFP)*





Clinton's visit fails to build bridges in Central America


PAUL RICHARDS / AFP

President Clinton listens to a speech by President Flores of Honduras during a tour of areas affected by Hurricane Mitch last year

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

NEARING the end of a four-day trip to Central America, President Clinton's efforts to paint the US role in the region in a humanitarian light threatened to come unstuck yesterday when local leaders raised complaints over Washington's policy of deporting illegal immigrants.

Mr Clinton has been at pains to draw a distinction between the US military involvement in Central America's bloody civil wars in the 1980s and the post-Hurricane Mitch relief effort in which American soldiers have flown food and medicines to the needy and helped to rebuild bridges and roads.

In a speech to American soldiers in Honduras, Mr Clinton said they were metaphorically building new bridges of understanding between the US and Central America. "You have shown the people of Central America the true colours of our men and women in uniform," he said.

It is a point that US officials in Mr Clinton's delegation seem anxious to emphasise. "Clearly there have been apprehensions in the past about the US military," said Michael Hammer, a spokesman for the President's National Security Council. "But the way we responded immediately through our military to provide assistance (after Mitch) has cast a new light on the US military, a positive light."

But the murky American role in the past is proving less easy to wipe away. In Guatemala, where Mr Clinton spent yesterday, an official Truth Commission published a report two weeks ago into the conduct of the war there. It concluded that the US gave money and training to the Guatemalan military which committed "acts of genocide" against the country's indigenous Mayan Indians.

Mr Clinton found that any goodwill the US has earned more recently is being undermined by a policy of deporting illegal Central American immigrants that local leaders say is fuelling the region's economic crisis. After Hurricane Mitch the Clinton Administration agreed to halt deportations. But the moratorium — still in effect for those from Nicaragua and Honduras — is set to end for those from El Salvador and Guatemala.

China policy blamed for US spy scandal

Damian Whitworth reports from Washington on the search to explain lax missile security

THE Clinton Administration was desperately trying to defend its relationship with China yesterday as criticism grew over the way it reacted to suspicions of major nuclear weapons espionage.

Al Gore, the Vice-President, aware that the furore over the sacking of a suspected Chinese spy could severely damage his hopes of winning the presidency, blamed former Presidents Reagan and Bush for the alleged passing of top secret information to China.

This did not stop furious accusations that the Clinton White House had been lax about tightening security and catching the spy because it feared upsetting China.

Wen Ho Lee, a Taiwanese-born scientist at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, was fired this week over suspicions that China had been given information that enabled it to leap a generation in the construction of nuclear weapons and develop missiles with multiple warheads each capable of destroying a city.

The information was believed to have been passed in the 1980s, but its theft was discovered in 1996 and reported to the White House. Mr Clinton has been accused by Republicans of failing to tell Congress about the discovery, of being complacent about the need for stricter security and of taking no action to catch the suspected spy. Mr Lee may have been under investigation for up to three years.

It is charged that Mr Clinton was anxious not to upset China at a time when he was preparing for the "strategic partnership" summit in 1997 and his administration was facing an investigation into claims that China had partly funded his 1996 campaign.

Mr Gore insisted that the fault lay with the presidents of the late 1980s and claimed that the current administration had done all it could to clean up the mess. "That happened during the previous administration back in the 1980s. As soon as the investigation identified targets the law enforcement community handled that very aggressively and it resulted in a presidential directive that completely changed the security procedures in the weapons labs," he said.

Mr Gore, who was at the centre of the China fundraising row and was criticised over a meeting he held with Li Peng, who as Prime Minister had ordered the Tiananmen Square crackdown, also defended the "constructive engagement" policy towards China that Steve Forbes, the Republican presidential candidate, this week called "appeasement".

"Having a relationship within which we can try to affect their behaviour and improve human rights, eliminate unfair trade practices and bring about the kind of changes that will lead to further democratisation in China [is] in our interest," he said.

But Republicans once again smell blood and Trent Lott, the Senate majority leader, said it was clear there had been "lax security" and an investigation would be launched to find out why it had taken so long to address the security problems.

Christopher Cox, the Republican chairman of a select committee investigating US military and commercial dealings with China, said he feared that it was part of a pattern in which weapons labs "failed to take even minimal steps necessary for counter intelligence".

The spy row comes as the White House prepares for a visit next month by the Zhu Rongji, the Chinese Prime Minister, amid tension over the targeting of Chinese missiles at Taiwan.

CARTOONISTS & WRITERS SYNDICATE



Heng's view in *Lianhe Zaobao*, Singapore, of the Chinese-American spy affair

Friends shocked by charges

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

THE scientific community at the supposedly top-secret, high-security nuclear weapons research laboratory at Los Alamos is reeling after the dismissal of a quiet, friendly colleague who is suspected of being the Chinese spy at the centre of the biggest espionage scandal in years.

Those who worked with Wen Ho Lee at the National Laboratory in the foothills of the Rockies in New Mexico and were his neighbours in the suburban community that has sprouted near by, said they were bewildered that he should have been fingered as the guilty man and cast out.

Mr Lee has made no comment, and disappeared when his name became public. But Don Marshall, who had lived next to him and enjoyed his home-cooked Peking duck, struggled to believe his friend was guilty. "He is either a very good actor, or he is not your man," he said. Others said he was well-liked and should have been given a full hearing before he was dismissed.

Mr Lee, in his late fifties, is understood to have been at Los Alamos since 1978 and in the 1980s began looking at nuclear weapon design and in particular how thermonuclear bombs are triggered. His alleged involvement in spying was reportedly traced to his trip to China in the late 1980s.

Smoking cowboy packs it in

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

HE WAS six storeys tall, towering over Sunset Boulevard with the mystique of an outsider and the confidence of a man who appears to know his own desires. Now the world's most famous Marlboro Man is gone, outlawed by a clause in the $206 billion (£126 billion) settlement between tobacco firms and state governments that requires all cigarette billboards in America to come down by April 23.

For many, this red-shirted cowboy beside the Chateau Marmont hotel where John Belushi died of an overdose transcended advertising. A 1991 *Los Angeles Times* art review described it as "a more enduring urban monument than almost any other building in Los Angeles".

But a crew arrived on Tuesday morning to prove once again that only impermanence is permanent in this place of lifestyle. One onlooker called the sign an institution and its passing "a real shame".



Dr Thomas Stuttaford reports on babies and jaundice; a new comb that kills lice; James Major and postural hypotension; transient ischaemic attacks (TIAs); and conditions that affect driving ability

Spotting the danger of jaundice

When a baby is developing in the womb, bilirubin, the bile pigments, cross the placental barrier and an all-providing mother excretes them. A healthy newborn is pink — or bright red — but within a day or two many show signs of jaundice.

In most cases this physiological jaundice merely gives babies a healthy look, more like a tan than a yellow hue. Once a baby has to battle with the world on its own, it has to excrete its own bilirubin, and if the system is late in clocking in, the bilirubin then starts to accumulate.

Premature babies are much more likely to be jaundiced than those who are delivered at term, but whatever the cause a close check is kept on it and the doctors make certain that it never reaches a point where damage is done to the child. Physiological jaundice clears more quickly if the baby is feeding well and kept well hydrated.

Physiological, normal, jaundice starts to show after two or three days and has usually disappeared by the time the child is a week old, although tests may show that the blood's bilirubin level is still raised until the tenth day. Fortunately it is usually mild, the baby is not unwell and does not stop feeding. Jaundice in the first two days, or persisting after the tenth day, always needs special investigation.

There are various causes of jaundice that show almost immediately after birth, including incompatibility between the mother's and the child's blood, unusual fragility of a baby's red blood cells, and sometimes an infection may cause early jaundice.

The causes of neo-natal jaundice, which comes on between the second and fifth day, at the same time as the physiological type, include various metabolic diseases in the mother and infections in the baby, especially those of the urinary or bile tracts.

Late onset, persistent jaundice, from ten to 14 days, is not always the result of breastfeeding, as is too often asserted, albeit that breast-fed babies tend to remain jaundiced for a longer period. Above all else, biliary atresia and an underactive thyroid are two very important causes of persistent jaundice which need early diagnosis and treatment. If an underactive thyroid, hypothyroidism, is not diagnosed and treated within a fortnight or so, the chances of a complete recovery and normal development are significantly reduced.

> 'If jaundice persists after ten days it must be acted on'

Likewise, biliary atresia, in which the bile ducts both inside and outside the liver become progressively blocked as the result of an inflammatory process, needs urgent surgical treatment. Surgery before eight weeks is essential if the baby is to have the best chance of a successful operation. If the bile drainage is not established, liver function slowly deteriorates and then the child's only hope of long-term survival is a liver transplant.

The Children's Liver Disease Foundation has drawn attention to the difference in outcome between this life-saving operation — the Kasai-portoenterostomy, which uses a loop of bowel to form an artificial duct down which the bile can drain — when done in one of the skilled centres and when it is done in an ordinary district general hospital. If only one case a year is operated on, the likely success rate is 17 per cent — in those units in which five cases or more are treated, the success rate is 64 per cent.

The foundation reckons that the baby's future depends on the skill of the surgeon, the experience of the team, as well, of course, as an early diagnosis by paediatricians, GPs and health visitors who have been caring for the baby since birth.

Mothers should be on the lookout for persistent jaundice, dark urine and pale stools and should consult their doctor if the baby's skin or the whites of the eyes are at all yellow after ten days.

● *Children's Liver Disease Foundation: 0121-212 3839.*



SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY

Itchy scalp: every school term sees a series of outbreaks of lice. The insects are easily spread through shared brushes

Can't get rid of hair lice? Fry them

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY, and its medical entomology centre in particular, has always been in the forefront of the battle against lice.

Recently the centre produced a paper on laboratory tests of the Robi Comb, a battery-powered comb that zaps the creatures by electrocuting, or dehydrating, them in an effective method of detection and control. The incidence of attacks waxes and wanes; during the Second World War they were very prevalent. The lice that affect human beings are of three different types — those that live on the head, the body or in the creases of clothes. The present scourge among children is head lice.

It is estimated that about four million people, not all of them children, catch lice each year. The life span of a louse is only 40 days but it can lay many hundreds of eggs during that time. The eggs are attached to the base of hair shafts and are known as nits. The start of every school term sees a series of outbreaks as lice are easily spread by shared brushes or head-to-head contact in the playground. If the hair is fair, the lice are light in colour; in a brunette they are brown.

There are many chemicals that will poison lice but parents are concerned about their toxicity. The Robi Comb delivers an electrical charge from a 1.5-volt battery. No shock reaches the patient as every alternate tooth is covered by a resin, preventing a circuit from being set up with the scalp. As the comb is drawn through the hair, it buzzes, but the buzzing stops each time it comes into contact with a louse. The louse is brushed away, buzzing restarts and combing can then continue.

Tense time for James Major

James Major and the vicar of a parish within the remit of my former practice do not have much in common, other than a tendency to suffer from postural hypotension. Both, it seems, are likely to collapse if they stand up too quickly, particularly if they are tired and tense.

What would be an incident of no concern other than to their friends and family becomes a general talking point because, in different ways, both the vicar and the son of the former Prime Minister are public figures. My vicar's worry — he was a strait-laced man who only occasionally blew the dust off his sherry bottle before pouring a small glass for favoured parishioners after church — was that his flock might think he was drunk. It is well-known that postural hypotension, also known as orthostatic hypotension, is worse after drinking.

The blood pressure of sufferers falls dramatically when they rise to their feet. Their circulation is slow to respond to the increased demands of the upright posture.

This is because there is some impairment in the sensors in the arteries which stimulate the changes in the circulation that compensate for the upright position and enable the heart to keep the brain supplied with blood. Without an adequate blood supply to the brain, a person collapses in a crumpled heap and may, occasionally, even have a seizure.

The condition is much more common in the overstressed and in those of middle age and beyond — people who are more of the age of the conscientious parson than James Major.

In the elderly many of the drugs used to treat blood pressure can have this effect — as can antidepressants and antipsychotic drugs — because these drugs reduce the sensitivity of the sensors.

The only recreational drugs — if they can be called that — that increase the likelihood of postural hypotension are alcohol, which increases the tendency of blood to pool in the feet, and barbiturates, which dull the senses. Drugs with an amphetamine-type reaction, including Ecstasy and cocaine, reduce the tendency to this problem.

This vasodilatation is also enhanced if the person has a temperature, the room is very warm, or if they are overtired. All these conditions cause swelling in the lower extremities, even if the arterial sensors are working well. A heavy meal increases the circulation of the blood to the stomach at the expense of the rest of the body. This, too, increases the likelihood of sudden collapse upon standing upright.

What is the best treatment? Deal with any particular cause, such as heart disease or diabetes. If there is no such cause, increase the number of early nights, try not to wine and dine too abundantly and, if sitting in a warm restaurant, rise to your feet very slowly. If lying flat, it is as well to sit on the edge of the bed before standing up — a discovery made by many pregnant women, who are also likely to suffer from it.

STEVE FINN/ALPHA

James Major collapsed during a night out with Emma Noble

A new spin on advice to drivers

DOCTORS are frequently asked by patients about ailments that would necessitate restrictions on driving. Even more often, doctors feel obliged to bring this issue up themselves, even if it means missing out on a bottle of whisky at Christmas from a grateful patient.

The DVLA sends a booklet to GPs which provides guidance on this thorny subject. Now Dr Nicholas Millard, a GP in Malvern, Worcestershire, has teamed up with Boehringer Ingelheim in Bracknell, Berkshire, to produce a revolving disc that gives doctors immediate access to information that helps them to advise their patients.

All the common conditions that make driving unsuitable can be found around the edge of the disc. Several operations are considered to be a bar to driving for a period. A GP could, for example, centre the disc on a transient ischaemic attack to learn that the ordinary domestic driver who has had his first attack should hide his car keys for a month.

If such a patient was a Group 2 driver — licensed to drive a heavy-goods vehicle or a minibus with more than eight seats — he should be off the driving roster for three months. Drivers in both categories should consult their doctors before returning to the driver's seat.

Private drivers with high blood pressure do not face a ban, but a heavy-goods driver is barred until blood pressure is reduced to under 180/100.

Angina is only a contraindication to private driving if it is induced by driving, or comes on at rest, when it should be abandoned until the symptoms have been controlled.

Surgery may also make driving hazardous and doctors should consult the DVLA about operations that they think might impair a patient's driving. The same advice applies when it comes to several different groups of drugs (even if they are not actually a bar) that may affect driving skills.

Warning signs of ischaemia

JONATHAN AITKEN'S transient ischaemic stroke has been widely reported. Initial accounts suggested that he had problems with his vision for a short time but he is now back to normal.

A firm diagnosis of a transient ischaemic attack, TIA, is difficult to make and is dependent on the patient's description of what happened. However, there may be associated conditions — an irregular heartbeat, a narrowed carotid artery to the neck, diabetes, high blood pressure or some other disease process which, when combined with the patient's account, make it highly likely.

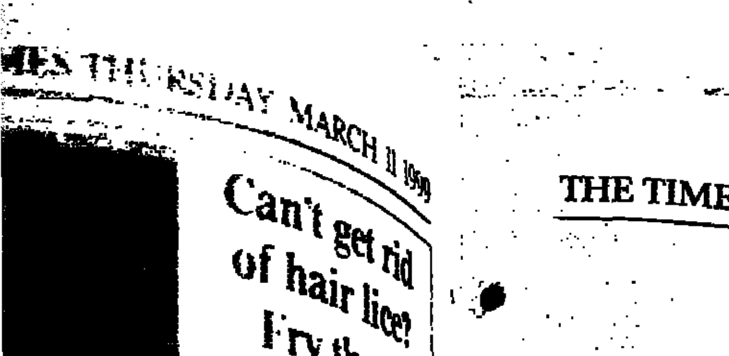
Usually patients lose function in part of their body so that there may be temporary weakness in an arm or a leg, loss of sensation or unusual feelings, such as pins and needles. It is not uncommon for there to be a transient loss of vision in one eye, a condition known as amaurosis fugax. Likewise, hearing can be lost or even the power of speech — aphasia. In any TIA there is a small clot, an embolus, that blocks an artery for a while before moving on.

A TIA is of sudden onset and lasts for only a short time. If it persists for more than 24 hours it is not included in this category. It has to be distinguished from migraine, which can have similar signs and symptoms.

The treatment for a TIA is the treatment for any underlying cause, coupled with anti-clot treatment. Patients will need to take aspirin regularly, combined with Persantin Retard (dipyridamole). Recently a new preparation, Plavix (clopidogrel), has been introduced.

Before TIAs were routinely treated, one out of six patients had suffered a major stroke within five years.





The Speer that I knew



Albert Speer was a complex man, fearful of society's vulnerability to charisma — a far cry from the grotesque character depicted in a new play, says **Gitta Sereny**, author of the definitive biography on Hitler's "great manager"

I went to the theatre last week, to see in English a play I had already watched on German television last year. It was called *Speer*.

The last time Albert Speer rang me was on August 31, 1981. My husband and I were in the country for the Bank Holiday weekend, and by the time we heard him saying he was in London for 24 hours and sad not to find us in, it was after 10pm on September 1 and he was dead.

Between that last humorous message — "I wanted to surprise you," spoken in his heavily accented English, no doubt so that my husband, whom he particularly liked, could understand him — and our first telephone conversation four years earlier, on July 15, 1977, he had phoned me, oh, probably 50, perhaps even 100 times. After the first year, during which we



Speer in 1973: he died in 1981

had spent a good deal of time working at his homes in Heidelberg and the south German mountains exploring his life, and I had accompanied him on some special occasions — book presentations, visits to one-time friends — he hardly ever spoke about the past; his mind, strange perhaps for a man then already over 70, was almost entirely on the future.

Except, that is, for an occasional mention of a dream he had had the previous night. I finally felt that he rang me every time he had that dream — always the same nightmare, of Hitler knowing that he had betrayed him at the end, and telling him that he knew Speer had wanted to kill him.

Speer foresaw enormous economic developments in Russia, and with them — prophetically, one might think — increasing freedoms accompanied by deep conflicts. He was always certain, and eager to indicate to me every political statement that pointed towards it, of an eventual European economic union, a beginning of which he had tried to initiate with his French counterpart, Jean Bichelonne, in July 1943. "It is inevitable," he said, and indeed it has materialised as the European Union. He was equally prescient about the economic inevitability of national and international mergers within the newspaper and publishing industry and, with it, increasing populism at the expense of quality. And — almost the only times he still brought up comparisons with his experience in the Third Reich — he often spoke of his fears, above all for the young, of the ever-rising influence of television: "We can only guess the extent to which Goebbels's dominance over radio and all other media programming won millions of minds for Hitler."

I read in my notes of one conversation we had in 1980; I think we were discussing a dreadful film somebody in Hollywood had recently made about him. "Film and, more than that, television, can do this again, I fear, for future potential despots," he said. "And next time, it won't even need a propaganda genius like Goebbels because ambition and competition — ie, money — will drive the powerful visual media to outdo each other in dramatising evil people and evil events ever more grippingly, poisoning the young."

Some of this, as I say, are things he said to me not once but many times over the years we knew each other. Some of it is in letters or essays he wrote in prison and later gave to me. And some of it, of course, is in the book I wrote about him, though not all because the book was already too long. But all of it — representing not only a large part of what he had written, but what he had read, thought about and the conclusions he had reached during 20 years in prison and then 15 more years until he died — was about the origin of evil, the portents of scientific and technical developments for the future of young generations. And, always the most intriguing and most dangerous to him, the vulnerability of societies, but even more, of individuals, to charisma. ("There we always stand on the thinnest edge between Scylla and Charybdis," he said.)

A lot of the questions I asked him for the book, and his answers, and statements from other books, including his own, were used in the play. This is normal: unadapted literature is not — cannot — be visual or audible drama. But in the case of the play we are discussing, we are faced with a moral question. I am not referring to the manipulations of historic facts and personalities that many great playwrights, Shakespeare most of all, engaged in. The greats, writing quite often unauthentically about historical personalities, had no need or inclination to proselytise, but simply adapted their characters to the dramatic needs of their plays.



FOX PHOTOS

Albert Speer and Adolf Hitler studying the plans for a new Berlin in 1938

Speer designed the Zeppelinfield tribune in Nuremberg, the site of the Nazi rallies

But is that justifiable in modern works concerning personalities who, whatever their discipline or art and however flawed, belong to our time as subjects not only of study and of warning, but also, if they reformed, as examples and even inspiration for the young?

A good example is Rolf Hochhuth's famous play of the Sixties, *The Deputy*, about Kurt Gerstein, that fascinatingly ambivalent character from Hitler's time. It shows how a fine playwright deals in an exemplary fashion with a complex personality, providing his audience with all aspects of the character but leaving to them the final decision on his motives.

> We do not see the different man that he fought to become

Although Esther Vilar's *Speer* is reviewed on another page today, I must at least sketch its theme, in so far as it substantiates the moral doubts I am raising. It takes place in 1980, when the 75-year-old Speer is invited to deliver a lecture on architecture in East Berlin, and afterwards to pay a nostalgic visit to his one-time office and creative lair in the Academy of Arts, where Hitler — strolling almost every night he was in Berlin across the small park that separated the building from his Chancellery — feasted his eyes on Speer's famous model of his planned "Germania", the rebuilt Berlin that was to be the capital of Europe.

His guide on this journey into the past is a pleasantly modest and apparently admiring young man called Bauer, who quickly turns into a ruthless inquisitor, uninterested in and ignorant about the real man across from him. He is primarily intent, like virtually all the journalists who interviewed Speer over the years, to prove him a liar in his denial of knowledge about the gassing of the Jews.

In Berlin this part was brilliantly played by Klaus Maria Brandauer, who, in a televised panel discussion after the opening there, made a remark of such intelligence and compassion that one will forgive him any mistake, even that of playing Speer in the London production, which he also directs.

His comment came after the moderator had asked one of the panel, Heinz Dürr, who until two years ago was head of German railways, whether, if he had held that job under Hitler, he would have kept up — as the incumbent of the time, Theodor Ganzenmüller, did — the careful scheduling of the freight trains that took Jews to the extermination camps.

Dürr, a tall, well-dressed man with a quiet managerial manner, pondered for a long time before he answered: "I have to say yes, I would have. I was a Nazi-educated boy, indoctrinated to do my duty, and this would quite simply and without further thought have been a normal part of duty."

Esther Vilar, sitting next to him, shook her head, smiling at him. "I don't believe you," she said. "You wouldn't have." Dürr tried again. "I know it is very hard to see it today as it was, but that's how we were." Vilar was still smiling: "I think it is a masochistic answer. You don't know yourself," she said, consolingly. Sentimentality and prejudice are anathema to art.

And this is where Brandauer came in: "I find it wonderful, really wonderful, Herr Dürr, that you are saying honestly as it was or would have been ... You were brought up a Nazi boy and such a person, grown up, you say, would not have reflected, would just have acted as he was taught to do ... I am so tired of all those people who, 60 years later, can only manage the answer 'we didn't know'. I'm so tired of all these lies; I'm so grateful to you for facing yourself as you would have been. We cannot, must not, criticise such honesty [storm of applause from the audience], for only this can bring us further."

We cannot go into the means Vilar's interrogator employs to force her Speer into submission. For although factually, often grossly, incorrect, the history of the origin of these quite devastating misinterpretations, (which, certainly not of her making, she unfortunately adopted from the subjective writing of others) is too complicated to analyse here.

However, her own almost total lack of understanding of Speer's personality is demonstrated in the last 15 minutes of the play, when the *apparent* reason for the invitation emerges (I will not give away the real one — disclosed in the last three minutes — which some people, though not I, might find entertaining). It is that East Germany's head of state, Erich Honecker, was inviting Hitler's great manager, Speer, to save the crumbling economy of East Germany.

Having spent 75 minutes watching the physical antics and above all listening to the choleric responses of Speer — who would never have gone to East Berlin in the first place, and who was the most restrained and self-controlled man, manifesting even the deepest anger by total stillness and a quiet, icy voice — one is not surprised when this grotesque figure manifests interest in this offer and even provides a quick and modern solution to the problem of East Germans escaping to the West: a microchip implanted, on some health pretext, into every citizen. "That could be one solution to the problem," he says. One would have laughed if all that ignorance had not been so shocking and all that waste of talent and energy so sad.

In Vilar's *Speer*, the years of his life before and after Hitler never happened: we see nothing of his youth, which caused the breakdown of his morality, we see nothing of the "different man" that the real Speer fought to become. All that any young people (hoping to learn more about this complex figure) will see — indeed, most of us will see, because that is what the playwright, in her misguided lack of faith in the capacity and power of remorse, wants us to see — is a cold man moved by nothing except ambition who, as Vilar triumphantly shows in those outrageous last 15 minutes, is the same moral zero in 1980 that he was during the 12 years of Hitler's awful rule.

● Speer *runs until March 27 at the Almeida, Islington, 0171-359 4404*

TODAY IN Section 2
ARTS
Klaus Maria Brandauer brings his explosive portrayal of Albert Speer to the London Stage page 30



Sons of the Vikings with axes to grind

When it comes to island life, it's ministers who are insular

You need to be tough to survive in Britain's northern islands. Perhaps that is why the Vikings, who settled there a thousand years ago, chose those fearsome names: Thorfinn Skull-splitter, Thorstein the Red, Erik Bloody-Axe, and his daughter Ragnhild, described as "a high-born woman of the tigress-harlot type, a consumer of men, thirsting for the blood of her lovers like a female spider". These days things are more conventional. The islanders call their children Ryan and Meg, like the rest of us, and their social habits, so far as I can determine, are rather more prosaic than those of their Viking ancestors. But they still need to be tough.

Standing on a bleak hillside in Orkney last weekend, my ankles deep in mud as a gale whipped the foam off a dark grey sea, I marvelled at how the island farmers hang on. For almost a year now they have had relentless rain, the worst weather conditions that many of them can remember. They have seen their tractors sink into sodden fields, the value of their sheep collapse, their beef hit by the BSE embargo, their milk and cereal prices at rock-bottom and their European subsidies reduced by the strong pound. On top of all this, as islanders, they face the added cost of transport. To ferry a cow from Orkney to Aberdeen costs £23 a head; for sheep it is £5, which is often as much as the sale price at the end of the journey. To fly from the island's capital, Kirkwall, to Edinburgh, costs more than a return flight from London to Málaga. I once worked out that for the price of an air ticket from London to Shetland and back, I could buy a round-trip package to Sydney.

Magnus Linklater

And now comes the Budget, with its steep increase in fuel prices. From behind the dispatch box, the Chancellor was able to describe it as a useful measure for protecting the environment. Higher petrol prices, he argued, would mean fewer cars choking up polluted high streets; cheaper road fund licences for small cars would penalise big gas-guzzlers, belching out their noxious fumes.

But when your high street is a winding country road and your vehicle is a battered Ford truck, all this talk of aiding the environment rings a little hollow. For the farmer, it simply means another financial burden. Already fuel costs in the Highlands are the highest in the country, and the Chancellor's extra tax will see petrol in Orkney inching close to £4 a gallon, a full pound more than for the motorist on the mainland. The increase in diesel in particular, by 6.1p per litre, was described by one farmer I spoke to as "devastating".

In any other industry, financial penalties of this order would be the cause of furious protest. One can imagine the response from provincial France, where farmers would by now be blocking main roads, releasing live pigs into Downing Street and dumping slurry in ministerial backyards. From Orkney the response has been low key, but undeniably bitter. Their farmers are among the most resilient and most efficient in Europe.

They have weathered economic recession and have managed to stay abreast of agricultural trends. But now the odds are stacked too heavily against them.

"This is a very urban-minded Government," said one of them, mildly. "They pay lip service to the country and the rural economy, but I don't believe they understand the reality of farming life."

That is an understatement. This Government has presided over an agricultural economy that has seen a fall in employment in Scotland of more than 8 per cent, and a net reduction of average incomes per farm from £5,000 to a wretched £416 last year — a staggering figure. The consequent cost of borrowing has risen to a total of £1.2 billion, which means that £30 million is being paid out in interest alone. We are in Third World territory here. Yet what we hear most about are measures to establish a right to roam, access for hill-walkers and land reform, none of which seems likely to add a single job or help a single hill-farmer avoid bankruptcy.

Ministers, of course, point to negotiations in Brussels, and the snail's pace reform of the CAP. They say that the United Kingdom is pushing hard for change. And yet one gains no sense that rural areas have a voice that is listened to. What they and, in particular, island economies, need is a level playing field, with government fulfilling its role of ensuring that basic services are provided at equal prices. Other European countries have a common fuel tariff so that prices are similar all over the country. If a Mars bar costs the same in Kirkwall as it does in Kensington, why not a gallon of petrol? Other European countries have a public service obligation, which ensures that transport costs are the same per mile wherever you are. Why not Britain? Why should the law require that electricity or gas charges be identical throughout the country, while British Airways is allowed to raise its fares at will, irrespective of the damage it causes to fragile rural economies?

It may be that a Scottish parliament will listen more attentively to its island citizens. And if it does so, the rewards will be considerable. Their needs, after all, are relatively modest. They are not looking for more handouts, simply for fair treatment. They are, at heart, an independent and self-sufficient people — they would not be islanders otherwise — and, if given the basic foundations on which to build, they can be relied upon to do so.

If not, however, they might just revert to type. Viking blood still runs in their veins, and ministers should remember that people like Thorfinn skull-splitter and Erik Bloody-Axe did not get their names by merely writing to their MPs.

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"ON T'OTHER HAND, WE'VE SAVED A ***FORTUNE*** ON PETROL!"

Come off it, Gordon

The Chancellor should be honest about his tax rises, or pay the price

A politician at the peak of his popularity and power faces an obvious problem: there is nowhere to go but down. This surely ought to be a worry for Gordon Brown. I say this partly because of the growing sense, inspired by the changeover plan for the euro, that the whole Blair Government is in danger of succumbing to a generalised hubris, while William Hague is finally beginning to get to grips with his job. After the ecstatic reception accorded this week to his third Budget, Mr Brown now faces a much more specific and concrete problem. "Everyone's a winner — guaranteed prize for every reader," gushed *The Sun* headline yesterday morning. "Apologies for Brown-nosing, but this is brilliant — he's helped every one of us," was the considered view on *The Mirror's* front-page.

This is as good as it gets for any politician. Mr Brown's personal popularity can now move in only one way. But what makes matters worse, much worse, for the whole Government is that the feverish expectations created by these headlines are going to be disappointed once people open their pay-slips and penetrate the veils of deception so skilfully flourished by Mr Brown. And when people discover they have been deceived, they are apt to become angry.

A portent of future trouble could be seen in Parliament yesterday, when the Prime Minister was trapped by Mr Hague into uttering a straightforward untruth he will live to regret. "How much has the Government raised taxes in its first three Budgets?" Mr Hague repeatedly demanded. "We have not raised taxes, we have cut them," Tony Blair insisted again and again. Yet this was simply false. As shown unambiguously in the Government's own Budget statement, taxes have risen in each of the past two years and will rise even more in the next financial year. In 1999-2000 the total tax increase will be £3.3 billion in cash terms or £2.6 billion once the automatic increases resulting from inflation are taken into account. In later years, the tax burden will rise even more sharply if Mr Brown sticks to the plans he has just outlined. The increase, in relation to an indexed base, will be £3.6 billion in 2000-01 and £4.1 billion in 2001-02. This last tax increase will be roughly equivalent to raising the standard rate of income tax by two pence in the pound. How, then, could the Prime Minister get away with claiming that his Government was cutting taxes? And why did Mr Brown inspire such enthusiasm in the popular press?

Apart from sheer gullibility, there is another easy answer: "lies, damned lies and statistics". Figures can always be found to justify any statement, including even the claim that Mr Brown has been a tax-cutting Chancellor. For example, he could simply assert that he had cut taxes by £5.1 billion (over three years) in Tuesday's Budget, while failing to mention that this "reduction" would not even offset half of the £11.9 billion of tax increases already legislated or planned. An alternative obfuscation, attempted in Parliament yesterday by Mr Blair, is to claim that the tax burden will fall in relation to gross domestic product. This is, of course, quite consistent with taxes rising inexorably, even after inflation is taken into account. But even on this Pickwickian definition of what consitutes a tax reduction, Mr Blair was being economical with the truth. He failed to point out that a small reduction in taxes as a share of GDP expected this year by the Treasury — from 37.2 per cent of GDP in 1998-99 to 36.6 per cent in 1999-2000 — is nothing more than a temporary blip, due to the economic slowdown. From April 2000 onwards, the Treasury's plans call for the tax burden, even expressed as a share of GDP, to resume its steady ascent. By the end of the present Parliament, the Treasury's own charts show the tax burden rising to a level not seen in this country since Nigel Lawson's tax cuts changed the course of fiscal history in 1988.

Anatole Kaletsky

The reason for laying out all these figures is not to attack the logic of Mr Brown's view that the British people must slowly but surely be persuaded to pay more tax. Personally, I tend to agree with the views of the Liberal Democrats on public spending: the poor state of various public services in Britain would justify a modest increase in the tax burden, provided that the Government could prove itself capable of spending the extra money efficiently and wisely on genuine public goods. I do not even object in principle to the aptly named "stealth taxes" so vehemently denounced by Mr Hague and the Tories. I think the "stealthiest" of these taxes — the £3 billion raised annually from pension funds by abolishing the obscure dividend imputation system — is economically well justified, and, in fact, I urged its introduction under the Tories. I also agree with the steady increase in energy and tobacco taxes. This has turned out to be the real mother lode in the Treasury goldmine, raising more than £5 billion a year by the end of this Parliament and promising far greater riches in the years beyond. I also support the restructuring of family support and national insurance, which will see many middle-class and skilled manual workers paying £500 extra in national insurance per year.

What I object to, however, is the pretence that all of these "stealth taxes" are completely painless and politically irrelevant, simply because they do not show up on our monthly payslips. I object to this partly out of respect for democracy and honesty, but also for less pompous reasons. In trying to deceive the public, Mr Brown risks more than discredit to his own Government. He also puts at risk the steady improvement in Britain's public finances initiated by Norman Lamont and Kenneth Clarke, as well as Labour's own hopes of a better-managed and stronger public sector. Worse still, he threatens the generally excellent prospects for the British economy in the years ahead.

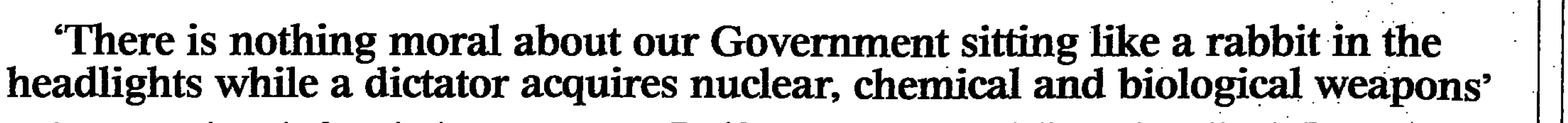
By pretending to be a tax-cutting Chancellor instead of having the courage to explain why modestly higher taxes are needed to fulfil the Government's promises, Mr Brown will be caught in a pincer movement between disillusioned voters and a disappointed public sector. On one side, *The Sun's* readers will demand genuine tax cuts once they realise that the "guaranteed prizes for every reader" announced on their newspaper's front page were little more than a conjuring trick financed by their own spending on petrol, tobacco and insurance.

On the other side, Mr Brown will face mounting pressure from public sector unions and proponents of bigger government — since he appears to have so much money to give out in tax cuts, surely he could afford to spend *it* on public services instead. In this respect, the most dangerous single measure in the Budget was the £640 million bounty to pensioners in the form of a Christmas bonus, payable to all. If the Treasury could afford this, it could surely afford anything.

The result of this pincer movement could be to undermine spending disciplines in the public sector at precisely the time when Mr Brown faces maximum pressure to deliver real, honest tax cuts, before the next general election. To make matters worse, public resistance to his stealth taxes could by that time have grown to the point where even the inexorable escalation of energy and tobacco taxes may no longer be politically acceptable. This tax resistance would become particularly acute if the Chancellor's luck ran out and oil prices began to rise, exposing the full extent of the Treasury's rising demands.

The combination of these political forces for higher spending and lower taxes could make it far more difficult for Mr Brown to stick to his fiscal plans than the Budget statement assumes. The consequence of any serious fiscal backsliding would, of course, be higher interest rates, higher inflation and, most probably, a stronger pound. In sum, the political pressures unleashed by this Budget's false promises could create exactly the outcome most abhorred by Mr Brown: a typical boom-bust cycle at the time of the next election. Mr Brown should enjoy his popularity while it lasts.

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'There is nothing moral about our Government sitting like a rabbit in the headlights while a dictator acquires nuclear, chemical and biological weapons'

David Hart

Many commentators, including some in *The Times*, refer disparagingly to the continuing operations against Iraq as an "undeclared war". Most wars are never declared, they just begin. This one, declared or not, is a good and just war against President Saddam Hussein and his disgusting regime. The Prime Minister deserves more support than he has received.

Mr Blair is known to have been shocked at the adverse reaction to Operation Desert Fox. In response he seems to have decided to conduct the present offensive *sotto voce*. That is a mistake. It invites criticism, as people sense that the Government may not be sure of its ground. And the least good argument for the Government's policy is the only one now put. Our forces, it is argued, are policing the United Nations-sponsored no-fly zones in order to protect the Kurds in the north and the Marsh Arabs in the south. That is true, and it may be noble, but the world is full of humanitarian causes that we cannot fight for.

Much of Mr Blair's problem arises because British governments are not good at debating and evolving a national policy and even worse at communicating it. Too often, officials manage to convince politicians that the issues are so complex the public wouldn't understand. In fact, a new government must debate national policy, first in Whitehall, but then in public. Modern Britons are well informed, those who want to be, and are perfectly capable of understanding the most difficult issues.

Such a debate should begin with an honest assessment of our position in the world and then go on to describe and give priority to the Government's goals for the nation. It should identify present and potential threats, not just to the State, but also to its ambitions. Once a national policy is in place, our diplomacy can have clear objectives — by no means always the case under Robin Cook — and a defence policy can be created that will give our diplomacy authority. If diplomacy fails, as it has in Iraq, it is much easier to secure public acceptance for the use of force.

The Cold War may be over, Armageddon postponed, but that does not mean that we do not face real and present threats. Events in far off lands, of which we know little, can have a real effect on our national wellbeing, especially now the global economy interconnects the world so comprehensively. Britain exports more per capita than any other nation, about 30 per cent of our GDP compared to Japan's 17 per cent and America's 11 per cent. So it matters more to us than most how the world orders itself.

Stability in the Middle East is as vital to Britain as in any region. Not just for British oil companies and exporters. An erratic oil price could cause severe economic pain, as it did in the 1970s. If Saddam is allowed to destabilise the region and oil prices rise, unemployment in Britain could rise, savings could again be eroded by inflation and living standards could decline — real dangers for Britain that no government can ignore.

For reasons of history, language and a largely common world outlook, America has and does provide us with generous intelligence assistance. That gives us a capability way beyond what we could afford to develop alone. With the old Soviet armoury under less than complete control and various unsavoury regimes around the world developing weapons of mass destruction, intelligence is probably more important to our security than any other capability.

For that reason alone, it is wise for a British government to share the military burden with the Americans where it can and where we share the strategic objective. The present banana split between the Americans and Europe should not cloud that verity.

Finally, for those who find the brute realities of Britain's national interest a little too gamey: the moral dimension. There is nothing moral about a government with our military capability sitting like a rabbit in the headlights while a dictator who has invaded two of his neighbours, used chemical weapons on his own citizens and has himself video-taped shooting his political opponents, just gets on and acquires nuclear, chemical and biological weapons so that he can threaten or annihilate thousands of innocents who happen to live far from Britain.

In continuing operations against Saddam, the Government is protecting Britain's vital national interest, maintaining the special relationship with America and trying to promote a moral good: the removal of Saddam. This is one government policy that has my full support.

The author was Independent Adviser to the Secretary of State for Defence from 1993 to 1997.

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THE TIMES DIARY

Bank account

JUST weeks after Sir Evelyn de Rothschild split from his wife, he has been consoled by a wealthy and glamorous American friend — Lynn Forrester (right), who entertains the Clintons at her Martha's Vineyard retreat.

The banking king, 67, (left), saddened friends by separating from his lovely wife of 25 years, Victoria, also an American. The friendly duo have been seen out, recently at Le Cirque, New York.

Ms Forrester, 44, is a millionaire phone magnate who is big in New York's Democratic elite.

She was married for ten years to Andrew Stein, former city council president, with whom she had two sons. In 1993 he abandoned his bid to become New York mayor after his marriage sadly failed.



PETER MANDELSON thought he had a buyer for that house. I gather he was prepared to accept around £750,000 — £35,000 less than the asking price, but the buyer has now not returned calls for several days.

■ GOOD news for James Major — who collapsed in a nightclub earlier this week — and his silicon engined fiancée, Emma Noble.

OK!, that important chronicle of modern culture, is negotiating to part with £250,000 for "exclusive" photographs of their May wedding.

"The editor believes the marriage will be one of the major events of the year, and wants it whatever the cost," gushes one. The deal might allow the former PM's son to move out of his in-laws in Sidcup.

DESPITE a love of powerful men, Monica Lewinsky almost cancelled her rendezvous with Mohamed Al Fayed at Harrods. Mo asked to give her a gift but his request went down badly. Piqued, he refused to introduce her to the media. His proposed pressie? A box of cigars.

■ SECRET research shows that Tony Blair's "Islington man" image is so loathsome to Scots that Blair is to replace himself with Gordon Brown as the face of the party for Scottish elections.

Focus Groups led by Philip Gould, the luvvy analyst, show that while the PM is seen as too London and Donald Dewar, the Secretary of State for Scotland, comes over as ineffectual, Brown stirs Scottish hearts. He admits he "will spend a bit more time than normal" in Scotland. When my lassie rang to ask if Blair plans to journey north, No 10 hung up.

AS President Khatami of Iran was being shoved around Rome (he has popped over to chat to the Pope and see the sights) his old friend Salman Rushdie was a pizza's throw away in Turin.

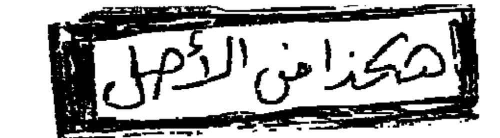


■ ALAN CLARK dined with Titus Oates. Descendant of the 17th-century anti-Catholic agitator, Oates popped over from America to sup in the Pugin Room. Father Michael Seed risked introducing Oates — whose ancestor was "the biggest villain and liar in Christendom" — to prod muncher, Ann Widdecombe and Lord Longford. Clarky rather pricked the party mood by hissing: "Oates was a traitor, a foul man".

LADIES day at No 11. Cherie Blair was so surprised to catch Gordon Brown surrounded by women that she smiled meekly — and bolted upstairs to her flat.

■ AFTER the theatrical budget, a Tory frontbencher muttered supportively: "God, I wouldn't be Tory leader for anything." For balance, I should add that as William Hague stuck into Gordon Brown at the dispatch box, the same shaker added: "But thank God William is."

JASPER GERARD





CHINA WORRIES

Nuclear spies, partisan politics and a troubled US strategy

Foreign policy plays a less decisive role in American presidential elections than it does in countries with far less demanding global trade and security interests. But every so often, as with the Vietnam War, broadly based disquiet about a particular policy can throw grit into the party oysters. For Bill Clinton, and even more for Al Gore whose campaign this will be in 2000, it cannot be good news that the Clinton "strategic partnership" with China could be turning into just such a piece of grit.

That partnership policy had already come under fierce fire before the developments of this week. The mainstream view is still that America must handle China's growing military and economic might by treating it, in hope, as a responsible "status quo" power. But there are dozens of vociferous counter-voices, both on left and right. The emotive and divisive post-1949 debate about "who lost China?" subsided after 1979, when Deng Xiaoping's modernisation drive started to open the country up. But distrust of Beijing surged up again with the Tiananmen massacre ten years ago; and the new Chinese missile build-up on the Taiwan Straits raises fears that "who lost Taiwan" could be the awkward political question of the future.

The "China question" has always had the potential to arouse Americans of all political persuasions. Democrats, and not only Democrats, are made restive by China's suppression of dissidents, repression in Tibet and the impact of its huge trade surplus with the US on American jobs. Republicans, who have long been exercised by abortion, religious persecution, copyright infringements, the suspicion that the Administration is weakening in its support for Taiwan and China's part in nuclear weapons proliferation, have broadened their attack since questions surfaced in 1996 about illegal Chinese campaign contributions to the Democrat campaign coffers. Doubts in all quarters about Chinsese ambitions and behaviour have been gravely exacerbated by evidence that, both legally and illegally, China has been acquiring massive quantities of militarily-sensitive American technology.

This is a combustible combination. The dismissal this week on suspicion of nuclear espionage of Wen Ho Lee, a Chinese-American weapons designer at the Los Alamos nuclear laboratory, has merely applied a match. Secrets passed by him to Beijing are believed to have enabled China to develop multiple-warhead missiles as sophisticated as Britain's Trident-2. This espionage, as the Clinton Administration emphasises, took place a decade ago, under the Bush Administration; but the Democrat White House knew about Mr Wen's activities as far back as 1996 and has come under opportunist Republican attack for being slow to act, for hiding the truth from Congress and for putting the relationship with China above other security issues.

The case is obviously serious in itself, with the damage to national security ranked by some in the CIA as greater even than that caused by the convicted spy, Aldrich Ames. But it also follows hard upon December's unanimous finding by a House of Representatives committee that US national security has been damaged by China's success in obtaining other sensitive US technology. House Republicans accuse the Administration of delay in publishing this report in declassified form.

The Senate normally veers to mainstream views on China. But its Intelligence Committee now wants to make public parts of its own inquiry into the 1996 campaign funds scandal and into US satellite sales to China. Although partisan politics is at work here — disclosure could seriously damage Al Gore — Senator Trent Lott's talk of charging Administration officials with contempt of Congress may reflect a wider change in Senate attitudes.

In truth, the US needs to worry as much about China's current weakness as its future strength, as is clear from the bleak picture given to the current session of China's People's Congress by Zhu Rongji, the Prime Minister. But when China's internal difficulties coincide with a fresh drive against dissidents and a truculent tone in foreign policy, that does not help its supporters. With patience strained in the US and pragmatism faltering in China, next month's US-China summit will be a tough test of the troubled Clinton strategy.

THE BYERS MARKET

The DTI chief cannot afford to go slow on his reforms

The political lifespans of Secretaries of State for Trade and Industry have not been impressive. A dozen figures have occupied that office since it was reconstituted 16 years ago: Not one has lasted much more than three years and Peter Mandelson served a mere five months before his enforced resignation. This instability has undoubtedly damaged the DTI within Whitehall. While this is neither a tragedy for British trade nor for industry, there are positive initiatives that the department can take to expand enterprise and competition. It is to the credit of Stephen Byers that these appear to be his objectives.

In a statement to the House of Commons yesterday Mr Byers placed his emphasis on populist new inquiries into the price of several high-profile consumer products. The prospect of the electricity industry and those responsible for the cost of compact discs being called to account will doubtless resonate with consumers. The extension of the league table culture to include the many providers of mortgages will also win plaudits. An international price comparison might also prove instructive. The most significant aspect of his announcement may be the element which, for the moment, contains the fewest details. Mr Byers has outlined his support for a sharp shift in the shape and scope of competition policy.

The Secretary of State argues that a new and independent competition agency should dominate all decisions on mergers. The political dimension of current arrangements has long been controversial. The creation of a small business service, providing a single focus for a series of initiatives that are presently dispersed across several departments, is plainly sensible. It is also encouraging that Mr Byers has maintained his predecessor's active interest in the promotion of science.

Mr Byers would clearly like to encourage a more transparent approach to competition policy on the lines of the American model. This is a noble aim but will require further institutional reform if it is to be realised. A new independent competition authority will need to be more than simply a renamed version of the present Monopolies and Mergers Commission if it is to be effective. The OFT, as currently constituted, is unlikely to pursue its expanded mandate with vigour. Mr Byers should make these issues the central priority of his forthcoming consultation document.

There is also little point in reducing the capacity of politicians to intervene in competition decisions if they can achieve similar ends by different methods. If new institutions are to be truly independent, they should set their own agendas rather than respond to ministers' instructions. The international price comparison and other hard evidence should determine the decision to launch an investigation. This would be an accurate replication of US arrangements. It would also ensure that sections of industry did not find themselves under constant inspection. Mr Byers has displayed sound instincts which can be made concrete in substance. He has the chance to shape a policy that serves the interests of entrepreneurs and consumers.

JACK THE DRIPPER

Ways of seeing a load of new Pollocks

"Is he America's greatest living artist?" asked *Time* magazine in 1949. A key New York critic had recently hailed a brooding, puzzled-looking, painter as the most important artist of the age. But many, this landmark article explained, still believed that Jackson Pollock, the man in question, made "nothing more than interesting if inexplicable decoration". Still others condemned his paintings as degenerate — "as unpalatable as yesterday's macaroni".

Pollock may be dead now, thrown from a car and slammed headlong into a tree at the age of 44. He habitually drove drunk, as if tempting the demons which had taunted him throughout his life to take their final toll. But critical confusion about his stature has long since been cleared up. Pollock is hailed as a founding father of Abstract Expressionism. His legend hangs around him like a cloud. The wild, personality of this disorderly, live-hard died-young alcoholic American is marketed as part of his work. And as a major Pollock retrospective opens at the Tate, London may congratulate itself for the second time this year. Once again, the capital becomes the only European venue for a most significant show.

Yet visitors flocking to see the work would do well to remember the doubts of that *Time* article published 50 years ago. A generation of critics have sealed up a reputation with red tape. Only uncertainty will return it fresh, as alive and enigmatic as it was meant to be. Spontaneity was the essence of Pollock's raw, sprawling style, of the paint splashed straight from the psyche of a rebellious boho. The canvas was less a construction than an arena of action. What unfurled on the long bolts of cotton rolled out across his Long Island studio was less a portrayal of intention than an improvisation, a dazzling record of some spur of the moment dance. The Tate judiciously installs a video of Pollock in its rotunda so that visitors may watch the artist at work, swinging, pouring, spattering dripping. It is an important reminder of how his work became what it is.

There will still be visitors who see nothing but macaroni. "Apocalyptic wallpaper" was one well recorded put down. Others will be surprised by the squiggles and splatters, awed by the energy, or confounded by a scary sense of void. It does not much matter. Instinct is more important than intellect in this show. Pollock himself said: "Don't look for anything. React." And that is what thousands of visitors, in positive and negative ways, are about to do.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Budget's critics voice their dissent

From Mrs Fiona Saunderson

Sir, Under which definition has the "family" benefited from the Chancellor's Budget (reports and details, March 10)? If family includes in its meaning an employed husband/father, an unemployed wife/mother, who acts (by choice) as principal carer for a child/children, then the Government has sent a clear anti-family message.

Gordon Brown is scrapping the married couple's allowance in April 2000 and a further 12 months will elapse before the launch of the children's tax credit. Further, the Chancellor has structured the proposed credit in such a way that it clearly discriminates against a family where only one parent earns. Under his scheme two parents can earn £30,000 apiece and claim the children's tax credit, whereas only one in the household earning more than £38,500 loses the right.

Tony Blair and his Government need to state clearly what they define as family.

Yours faithfully,
FIONA T. SAUNDERSON,
5 Thornhill Square, N1 1BQ.
ggu11@dial.pipex.com
March 10.

From Mr Trevor Kemish

Sir, As a non-smoking, enterprising, hard-working, self-employed, property-owning family man my disposable income will fall following Gordon Brown's Budget.

I should like to know what I am doing wrong and in an effort to redress this situation would be interested to know where I can purchase a reliable, practical car big enough for my family and business but with an engine of less than 1100cc.

Yours,
TREVOR KEMISH,
17 Whitebeam Road,
Hedge End, Southampton SO30 0PY.
March 10.

From Mr Peter White

Sir, I find Gordon Brown's 6p rise in the price of diesel fuel both disappointing and perplexing.

I have just exchanged a small petrol car for a small diesel car and have thereby almost exactly doubled the miles I can achieve with one gallon of fuel. It would seem to me, therefore, that diesel emissions would have to be 100 per cent more polluting than those of petrol to justify Mr Brown's actions, as I burn half the amount of fuel to travel the same distance. Even the gloomiest scientific reports do not suggest that this is the case, indeed it is my understanding that a well-tuned diesel engine is less damaging to the atmosphere than a petrol engine. In the rest of Europe diesel remains a cheaper option than petrol.

Mr Brown wants us to use public transport: nearly all buses and taxis run on diesel.

Yours faithfully,
PETER WHITE,
Southview,
Upper Guildown Road,
Guildford, Surrey GU2 5EZ.
March 10.

From Mr D. J. Brock

Sir, The usual oversimplification and claims by Mr and Mrs Average to be a pound or two better off. In fact, as happens every time, road fuel goes up so *everything* goes up.

Yours faithfully,
D. J. BROCK,
76 Buchanan Road,
Rugby, Warwickshire CV22 6AZ.
March 10.

From Mr Jeremy J. H. Westwood

Sir, The real losers from yesterday's Budget are those who live and work in the country. We already suffer from the Government's ridiculous beef on the bone ban and other factors, and now face a huge rise in fuel costs, with no other means of transport available.

Does anyone care?

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY J. H. WESTWOOD,
Mire House,
Cautley, Cumbria LA10 5LY.
jeremy1943@aol.com
March 10.

From Mr David Lindsay

Sir, I could not believe my eyes when reading in the Chancellor's speech that the levy on business use of energy is to be offset by a reduction in employers' national insurance contributions.

Apart from the fact that there is no obvious connection between payroll size and energy use, such raiding of the national insurance fund, when there are so many legitimate claims on it, is shameless.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID LINDSAY,
36 Orchard Coombe,
Whitchurch Hill, Reading RG8 7QL.
March 10.

From Mr Peter A. Rushforth

Sir, The Chancellor has increased cigarettes by 17½p. Is the Government planning to reintroduce the ½p coin?

Yours truly,
P. A. RUSHFORTH,
36 Sutton Drive,
Cullingworth, Bradford BD13 5BQ.
March 10.

Does every teacher need a laptop?

From Mr Tony Holland

Sir, I am one of the 1,000 fortunate teachers who has already received a laptop computer from the Government (report, March 6). Almost a year later, I do not know how I ever managed without it. I am the head of a small village primary school and it has been invaluable for administrative work, as well as preparing for our overloaded and impossible national curriculum (including the literacy hour).

The children have also benefited and all ages and abilities in my class (seven to eleven-year-olds) use the e-mail facility and website with confidence. They have also created a website and are continually working to improve it.

In spite of this I would much rather have had the money instead of the computer, digital camera, printer and a year's access to the Internet, to replace the 5 per cent budget cut I suffered last year — in real terms £4,000 which, coincidentally, is what my computer and all the equipment cost.

Yours faithfully,
TONY HOLLAND,
65 Millmoor Way,
North Hykeham, Lincoln LN6 9PJ.
acholland@portables1.ngfl.gov.uk
March 6.

From Mr Gary Longman

Sir, The government scheme to provide all teachers with a laptop costing £1,000 will cost nearly £60,000 in my school. The news comes at the end of a week when I was informed that, under the Government's "fair funding" policy, my school budget has been cut by £90,000 for next year.

Perhaps the Government would be better considering the question: is it better to give every teacher a laptop, or have every teacher standing in front of a class of the smallest possible size?

Yours faithfully,
GARY LONGMAN
(Secondary school head teacher),
The Ridings, Station Road, Barnack,
Stamford, Lincolnshire PE9 3DW.
gll@globalnet.co.uk
March 8.

From Mr Francis Charters

Sir, I am a computer teacher in a special needs unit. The Fund for Learning offered one of our units over £1,000 to get on the Internet. But since putting in the bid to the fund over six months ago, I have put another centre on the Internet, at the cost of £50 for a modem.

Though I have spent much time on the Net I fail to see much use for it in the classroom. Having one computer on the Net has been useful for demonstration purposes, e-mail, downloaded sites for the pupils' later reference and teachers' research. I believe books and materials come higher in our priorities than machine-reliant technology such as the Net, which is often slow.

As for buying each teacher a laptop, I consider this a waste of money. Laptop computers are considerably more expensive to purchase and mend than desktop computers and they are more vulnerable to breakage and theft.

Before we consider expanding information technology in our education system we should make sure all children have access to our present service. I was in a mainstream comprehensive school recently where a class of 14-year-olds had one lesson on the computer a week (two to a machine), in one term of the year. This is not acceptable.

Yours faithfully,
FRANCIS CHARTERS,
c/o 11 Eastnor Grove,
Leamington Spa,
Warwickshire CV31 1LD.
March 6.

From Mr Michael Barratt

Sir, The head teacher of my son's secondary school has just written to every parent expressing concern that school budgets in Sussex are likely to be cut this year.

Even now there are not sufficient textbooks either in the classroom or for pupils to take away for homework or GCSE coursework. The £2,000 given by the Chancellor in the Budget to every school for books will, I suspect, only partly alleviate the situation.

Class sizes are about 30, but over 25 per cent of students are designated as having special needs. I believe that in such an environment, academically able students, whether they have special needs or not, are severely disadvantaged — an inequality of opportunity recorded in the school's GCSE results last year, when only 24 per cent achieved A-C grades in five subjects.

Providing each teacher with a laptop for home use may have merit, but what are my son's teachers going to do with them — record continuing failure on spreadsheets and charts?

Regards,
MICHAEL BARRATT,
11 Tussock Close,
Crawley, Sussex RH11 8BE.
mrb@eurobell.co.uk
March 10.

Tory beliefs

From Mr David S. Gold

Sir, I regret that your correspondents today feel the need to criticise Mr Hague as he prepares the Conservative Party for the next election.

Surely it is right that after such a thumping defeat the Conservatives should learn the lessons and respond appropriately. The Conservative Party leader has repeatedly said that he is not abandoning core Conservative principles. On the contrary, he is refocusing on them.

Just as Mr Blair was forced to change his party's beliefs to fit the electorate, so Mr Hague is bringing his party back in line with the electorate's beliefs — Conservative beliefs. If he is prevented from doing so, I fear that the Conservatives will remain in the wilderness.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID GOLD,
9a Bond Street, Ealing, W5 5AP.
March 10.

Euro elections

From Mr Robert Moreland

Sir, Dr David Butler and Mr Peter Snow call (letter, March 6) for two administrative changes to the conduct of the counting for the June European elections.

Behind their complaints lies the fact that the European elections, despite the enormous complexity of the new proportional representation system, will still depend on the old-fashioned manual counting of bits of paper by a vast number of local government staff.

Surely the time has come to move to electronic counting, which has the virtue of being quicker, simpler, cheaper and more accurate?

Yours etc,
ROBERT MORELAND,
3 The Firs,
Heathville Road,
Gloucester GL1 3EW.
r.moreland@virgin.net
March 8.

Where now brown cow?

From Dr Richard Aspin

Sir, Professor Stock (letter, March 5) stakes a rival claim for ownership of the real hide of Jenner's cow for St George's Hospital Medical School, in competition with Gloucester Folk Museum (letter, March 3), and speculates that Jenner had perhaps more than one animal. This reminds me of the craze for relics in the Middle Ages, when the number of purported fragments of the True Cross would have been enough to populate a forest.

It is surely much more likely that neither hide is genuine. The beatification of Jenner was an early development, and relic-hunters were soon at work, with all the associated fallout such as forged autographs.

Many of the relics, genuine and bogus, fetched up in the collections of my own institution. It might be appropriate for all such saints' relics to carry a government health warning.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD ASPIN
(Curator of Western Manuscripts),
Wellcome Institute for the
History of Medicine,
The Wellcome Trust,
183 Euston Road, NW1 2BE.
r.aspin@wellcome.ac.uk
March 5.

From Mrs Susan Gove

Sir, From my office in the library at St George's Hospital Medical School I can see Dr Jenner's cow encased in glass on the wall.

The cowskin moved to Tooting when the school and hospital relocated in the 1970s from Hyde Park Corner, where it had hung in the library for many years. On a short study visit to Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore I was surprised to see a few hairs from the cow's skin prominently displayed in the library. These had been presented by St George's as a parting gift to a visiting physician in 1890.

We do not claim ownership of the original horns, which were sold by an impecunious descendant of Jenner's to an American university in the 1930s. Our original horn copies are wooden. The Royal College of Physicians in London is the proud possessor of a single horn from the Gloucester herd.

Yours faithfully,
S. GOVE
(Librarian and custodian of
Jenner's cow),
St George's Hospital Medical School,
Cranmer Terrace, Tooting, SW7 0RE.
March 5.

From Professor Nicola LeFanu

Sir, Jenner's cow is not bilocating. In his Jenner bibliography (1985) my late father William LeFanu writes:

The cow's hide was given by his son Col. Robert Jenner to St George's Hospital Medical School; the hide of another cow, which also provided cowpox virus, was for many years in the chemist's shop of Anderson and Virgo in Worcester.

Yours faithfully,
NICOLA LeFANU,
5 Holly Terrace, York YO10 4DS.
March 7.

Letters to the Editor for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

English as spoken on her estuaries

From Mr Edward Grayson

Sir, Penny Wark's endorsement of Beryl Bainbridge's condemnation of regional accents (article "Why Beryl speaks for the nation", March 4) has a precedent from equally authoritative sources, the immortal C. B. Fry, and Lord Birkenhead.

In Fry's *Life Worth Living*, published in 1939, he recalled the vintage years at Wadham, Oxford, in the early 1890s, with F. E. Smith, John Simon and others destined for high office, and particularly the unashamed ambition of "F. E." before receiving his peerage title taken from his native Birkenhead upon appointment as Lord Chancellor.

Fry emphasised how, when they came up together in 1892, F. E. had a marked Lancashire accent, which soon disappeared. When I enjoyed the fruits of friendship with Fry during the early 1950s while I was persuading him to contribute a generous foreword to echoes of his own era in *Corinthians and Cricketers*, I queried tentatively whether this was a possible exaggeration, distilled by the mists of time.

Unhesitatingly the reply was: "It was an accent as broad as Gracie Fields's. As soon as he got rid of it I realised he intended to do something with his life."

I am sir,
Yours faithfully,
EDWARD GRAYSON,
9-12 Bell Yard, WC2A 2LF.
March 5.

From Mr E. S. Hooper

Sir, George Bernard Shaw, Fabian Socialist, in his preface to *Pygmalion* (1913, and still, like all Shavian prefaces, worth reading) made the point that society would be less divided if we all sounded the same when speaking. Shaw took it for granted that we should all speak decent, grammatical English.

Responsible radio and television could be very helpful. Instead, irresponsible radio and television spread "Estuary English", or what Ms Penny Wark describes as faux-Essex, so that international co-operation has been replaced by inner-national cop-eration, although, to compensate, missiles have been replaced by missals.

Yours faithfully,
STANLEY HOOPER,
Thurlow House,
Epworth, Doncaster DN9 1JU.
March 4.

BBC 'put-downs'

From Mr Adam Clapham

Sir, The BBC has always been a master of the diplomatic put-down. Its rebuttal of Lord Hussey of North Bradley's criticism — "Much has happened in the media world in the three years since Lord Hussey left" (report, "Hussey attacks BBC spending on bureaucracy", later editions, March 4) — has an icy effectiveness.

Some years ago the BBC was assailed by an outraged Conservative politician whose contribution was edited from a programme I produced. I was asked to draft a reply for the Director-General. I could think of no explanation for my conduct, other than the truth: the contributor had been crashingly boring.

In a masterful paraphrase the Director-General responded to him: "I think you must admit that your contribution was not as effective as it might have been."

Peace was restored.

Yours faithfully,
ADAM CLAPHAM
(Director), Gryphon Films,
The Chrysalis Building,
Bramley Road, W10 6SP.
March 4.

Bishops in the Lords

From Mr Nicolas Walter

Sir, If it is wrong, as it surely is, for any religious organisation to have the special advantage of its representatives being automatically included in Parliament (letters, February 22 and March 2), it is surely also wrong for any religious organisation to have the special disadvantage of its representatives being automatically excluded from Parliament.

When Anglican bishops lose the right to sit in the House of Lords, Anglican and Roman Catholic priests should gain the right to sit in the House of Commons. Fair's fair.

Yours etc,
NICOLAS WALTER,
Rationalist Press Association,
88 Islington High Street, N1 8EW.

Cloudgazing

From Dr Michael N. Rushton

Sir, For the past six days the inclement weather has prevented me from viewing the conjunction of Venus and Jupiter (report, later editions, February 24). I am left with the thought that Jesus was fortunate in being born in Bethlehem. Had he been born in Cheshire, he would have had no birthday presents.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL N. RUSHTON,
Well House, Well Lane,
Little Budworth,
Nr Tarporley, Cheshire CW6 9DA.
March 2.



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 10: Her Excellency Madame Mariama Hima was received in audience this morning by The Queen and presented the Letters of Recall of her predecessor and her own Letters of Credence as Ambassador of Niger to the Court of St James's.

Mr John Shepherd (Deputy Under Secretary, Foreign and Commonwealth Office) was present.

The Archbishop of Canterbury was received in audience by The Queen.

The Queen held a Council at 12.30pm.

There were present: The Right Honourable Margaret Beckett (President), the Right Honourable Lord Carter (Captain, Gentleman-at-Arms), the Right Honourable Lord Hardie (Lord Advocate) and the Right Honourable Jack Cunningham (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster).

The Baroness Hollis of Heigham, Miss Hilary Armstrong, MP, Mr Richard Caborn, MP, and Mr Ian McCartney, MP, were sworn in as Members of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council.

Mr Alex Galloway was in attendance as Clerk of the Council.

The King of Swaziland and Her Royal Highness Inkhosikati visited The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh this afternoon and remained to Lunch.

The following were invited: Prince Maguga, Princess Lomhlangano, Councillor T.V. Mthethwa (Chief of Zombodze Area and Senior Governor in Royal Household), the Hon A.M.H. Shabangu (Minister, Foreign Affairs and Trade), His Excellency the Rev Percy S. Mngomezulu (High Commissioner for Swaziland), Sir John Kerr and Mr John Doble.

A Guard of Honour, found by the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards, was mounted in the Quadrangle.

The Major General Commanding Household Division and the Field Officer in Brigade Waiting were present.

The Right Honourable Tony Blair, MP (Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury) had an Audience of The Queen this evening.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 10: The Duke of Edinburgh, Founder and Chairman of the International Trustees of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award International Association, this afternoon departed RAF Northolt for Belgium.

His Royal Highness this evening attended a Dinner for the Benelux Award in Antwerp, Belgium.

Brigadier Miles Hunt-Davis is in attendance.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 10: This morning The Prince of Wales opened a new branch of Lloyds Bank in Buenos Aires.

His Royal Highness later visited the Buenas Ondas Organic Farming Project for street children.

This afternoon His Royal Highness visited the Siderar Steel Plant and inaugurated a joint UK-Argentinian material handling and equipment facility.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 10: The Duke of York gave a reception for Understanding Industry at St James's Palace.

March 10: Today is the Anniversary of the Birthday of The Prince Edward.

His Royal Highness, Trustee, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award International Foundation, this afternoon attended a Gold Award Ceremony followed by a Reception for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Young Canadians Challenge, in the Hotel Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 10: The Princess Royal this morning arrived at Kyoto Station, Japan, and was received by Her Majesty's Consul-General, Osaka (Mr Rodney Cummins).

Her Royal Highness attended a lunch with Non Governmental Organisation representatives at Doi, Kyoto.

The Princess Royal this afternoon visited Warashibe-en, Institute for the Disabled, Hirakata City.

Her Royal Highness, President, Save the Children, this evening attended a Reception and Dinner at the Imperial Hotel, Osaka.

KENSINGTON PALACE
March 10: The Duke of Gloucester this afternoon visited Kent and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant (The Lord Kingsdown, KG).

His Royal Highness, Commissioner, English Heritage, this afternoon visited Bradbourne House, East Malling, Kent.

The Duke of Gloucester, as Grand Prior, The Order of St John, afterwards opened the new St John Ambulance County Headquarters and Training Centre, West Malling, Kent.

Today's birthdays

Mr Douglas Adams, author, 47; Mr Terence Alexander, actor, 76; Miss Agatha Barbara, former president, Malta, 76; Sir John Batten, former Physician to The Queen, 75; Mr K.L. Bedell-Pearce, director international development, Prudential Corporation, 53; Professor A.O. Betts, former Principal, Royal Veterinary College, 72; Dr John Beynon, former Principal, King's College London, 60; Miss Louise Brough, tennis player, 76; Lord Congleton, 69; Sir Kenneth Dover, former President, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 79; Mr Dennis Enright, writer, 79; Mr Peter Eyre, actor, 57; Mr Michael Flesch, QC, 59; Mr David Gentleman, painter and designer, 69; Mr Jonathan Gestetner, director, Marlborough Rare Books, 59; Professor T.C. Gray, anaesthetist, 86; Viscount Hood, 85; Lord Lawson of Blaby, 67; Sir Henry Marking, former chairman, British Tourist Authority, 79; Mr Timothy Mason, director, Museums and Galleries Commission, 54; Vice-Admiral Sir Christopher Morgan, 60; Air Marshal Sir Alec Morris, 73; Lord Mowbray and Stourton, 76; Mr Rupert Murdoch, chairman and chief executive, The News Corporation, 68; Miss Erica O'Donnell, founder, Study Centre for the History of the Fine and Decorative Arts, 79; Lord Justice Pill, 61; Mrs Jennifer Smith, former Principal, Harrogate Ladies College, 49; Mr Richard Smith, Editor, *British Medical Journal*, 47; Sir Keith Speed, MP, director, Newbridge Partnership, 65; Sir Iain Tennant, KT, former Lord-Lieutenant of Morayshire, 80; Miss Patricia Tindale, architect, 73; Mr Ron Todd, trade unionist, 72; Sir Peter Walters, chairman, SmithKline Beecham, 68; Mr J. Whybrow, chief executive, Philips Holding, 52; Lord Wilberforce, 92; Mr Alan Yentob, director of television, BBC Broadcast, 52.

Church in Wales

Diocese of Swansea and Brecon
The Rev Annette Francis, Curate of Cockett, to be Rector of Llanelli (Gilwern).
The Rev D. Islwyn Davies, Vicar of Pontiets w Llangyndeyrn, St Davids diocese, to be Rector of Ystradgynlais, Swansea and Brecon diocese.

CHRIS HARRIS



The Rev Dr Peter Graves, Superintendent Minister, Methodist Central Hall, the Very Rev Dr Wesley Carr, Dean of Westminster, and the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster with the Cross that will be carried on Good Friday in the Crucifixion procession from the Central Hall to Westminster Cathedral and on to Westminster Abbey

Today's royal engagements

The Duke of Edinburgh, Chancellor of Cambridge University, will preside at a meeting of the Cambridge European Trust at Buckingham Palace at 11.30; and as patron and trustee, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, will give a dinner for Charter Founder members at Buckingham Palace at 7.40.
The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester will attend the Council for Music in Hospitals' concert at St John's Smith Square, London SW1 at 7.30.
The Duchess of Gloucester, as patron, will visit the Bobath Centre (for children with Cerebal Palsy) 250 East End Road, London W2, at 3.00.

Luncheons

Lord Mayor
The Lord Mayor gave a luncheon yesterday at the Mansion House for Members of Parliament for London constituencies. Among those present were:
The Hon Peter Brooke, CH, MP, Mr Eric Forth, MP, Mr Mike Gapes, MP, Ms Joan Ryan, MP, Mr Richard Ottaway, MP, Mr Paul Burstow, MP, Mr John Austin, MP, Mr Nigel Beard, MP, Ms Judith Church, MP, Mr Harry Cohen, MP, Mr Iain Duncan-Smith, MP, Mr Barry Gardiner, MP, Ms Eileen Gordon, MP, Ms Jacqui Lait, MP, Mr Ken Livingstone, MP, and Ms Linda Perham, MP.

Lady Mayoress
The Lady Mayoress gave a luncheon at the Mansion House yesterday for the City's livery companies concerned with the equestrian world. Mr Richard Page, MP, Mr Michael Mates, MP, and representatives of the Saddlers', Blacksmiths', Farriers', Loriners' and Farmers' Companies were among the guests.

Academy of Experts
Mr Michael Cohen, outgoing Chairman of The Academy of Experts, was the host at a luncheon held yesterday at the RAF Club to mark the change in officers. Lord Howe of Aberavon, CH, QC, Sir Donald Harrison, Her Honour Jean Graham Hall, Mr Richard Freeman (chairman elect) and Miss Marion Simmons, QC, were among the guests.

United Grand Lodge of England

Lord Farnham, Pro Grand Master, presided at the Quarterly Communication of the United Grand Lodge of England held yesterday at Freemasons' Hall.

University news

Emmanuel College, Cambridge
Elected into Honorary Fellowships with effect from February 15, 1999: Peter Michael Beckwith, MA. Jaggan Nath Dhamija, MA.

Restorer's action destroyed work by great painter

By Dalya Alberge, Arts Correspondent

FIGURES that once strolled in a 17th-century landscape, but were removed in the 1960s by an over-zealous restorer who assumed they were unimportant later additions, have now been identified as the work of one of the greatest 18th-century French painters, Antoine Watteau.

Martin Eidelberg, professor of art history at Rutgers State University of New Jersey, says that those figures were by the master himself and not by some insignificant later hand, as previously assumed.

He despaired at the loss, lamenting that anything by such a great painter should have been dissolved away in turpentine. Most importantly, he warned restorers to learn from this case.

Professor Eidelberg will be announcing his findings in London tomorrow at a Burlington House lecture entitled *Restoration: does it reveal or deceive?* organised by Art Watch, an organisation devoted to keeping a check on restoration around the world.

Long after the painting was acquired by the Lille Musée des Beaux-Arts as a Watteau, it had been downgraded to an unknown hand of the period. In 1968 it was restored at the Versailles laboratory when all the figures were removed by a restorer who is no longer alive: "When they looked at it and started cleaning it, they realised the figures lay on the upper surface and cleaned them off."

The landscape is too dark and romantic to be a Watteau, said Professor Eidelberg, who has now not only linked those figures to a known drawing which Christie's sold in 1996, but identified the artist who painted the landscape. It is the work of Henry Ferguson, a British artist who was highly sought after during his lifetime: today he is overshadowed by his father, William Ferguson.

In the 18th century, Professor Eidelberg explained, it was not unusual for artists — including Boucher and Fragonard — to add figures to landscapes of the 17th century. To have removed the figures was a total mistake: Watteau is ten times more important than Mr Ferguson.

Other speakers on March 12 include Professor James Beck of Columbia University, New York — challenging the controversial attribution of an image of Cupid to Michelangelo; Michael Daley, director of ArtWatch UK, on what he believes is the National Gallery's misreading of the skull in Holbein's *Ambassadors*; and Professor A.B Alyoshin from the Russian Academy of Arts, St Petersburg, on the deception of restorers. The lecture takes place from 6pm to 9pm at the Linnean Society, Burlington House, London, W1; tickets on the door cost £5.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Sir Henry Tate, founder of the Tate Gallery, Chorley, 1819; Sir Malcolm Campbell, holder of speed records on land and water, Chislehurst, Kent, 1885; Jessie Matthews, singer and actress, London, 1907.

DEATHS: Rolf Boldrewood (Thomas A. Browne), novelist, Melbourne, 1915; Sir Alexander Fleming, discoverer of penicillin, Nobel laureate 1945, London, 1955; Richard Byrd, aviator and Polar explorer, Boston, Massachusetts, 1957; Earl Stanley Gardner, crime writer, Temecula, California, 1970.

Reception

The London Institute
The Chairman of the London Institute, Mr Julian E. Markham, and the Rector of the London Institute, Sir William Stubbs, were the hosts at a reception held yesterday evening, at the Institute's Gallery at 65 Davies Street, London W1, to launch the Institute's Annual Report. Ambassadors, Members of Parliament, leading figures from the worlds of business, education and art and design were among the guests.

Dinners

Association of Lancastrians in London
Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Johns, Chief of the Air Staff, accompanied by Lady Johns, was the guest speaker at the City dinner of the Association of Lancastrians in London held yesterday at the RAF Club, Piccadilly. Air Vice-Marshal G.C. Lamb, president, accompanied by Mrs Lamb, presided.

Cardiff Business Club
The President of Cardiff Business Club, Mr C.N.D. Cole, the Lord Lieutenant for South Glamorgan, Captain N. Lloyd Edwards and the High Sheriff of South Glamorgan, Mr David M. Jones, were present at a dinner held by the Club at the Park Hotel, Cardiff last night. The guest speaker was Viscount Younger of Leckie, KT. Mr Stephen Solomon, Chief Manager, Royal Bank of Scotland, South Wales, presided.

Lecture

The Pilgrims
Lord Healey, CH, delivered The Pilgrims' 1999 Reflections lecture yesterday at Senate House, London University, in conjunction with the Institute of United States Studies. Professor Robert M. Worcester, Chairman of The Pilgrims, welcomed members and their guests. Professor Graham Zellick, Vice-Chancellor of London University, also spoke. Baroness Thatcher, LG, OM, FRS, Chairman of IUSS, was among those present.

Church news

Free Churches' Council
The Rev Anthony Burnham has become Moderator of the Free Churches' Council and Free Church President of Churches Together in England in succession to the Rev Baroness Richardson of Calow.

Retirement

His Honour Anthony Tibber has retired from the South Eastern Circuit Bench.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr J.R. Adam-Smith and Miss R.E. Shepherd
The engagement is announced between Jolyon, youngest son of Mr and Mrs R.M. Adam-Smith, of Frensham, Surrey, and Rachel, daughter of Mr M.L. Shepherd and Mrs C.C. Main, of West Yorkshire.

Mr J.W. Allan and Miss A. Bacon
The engagement is announced between James, eldest son of the late Mr and Mrs Peter Allan, of Marhamchurch, Cornwall, and Anne, daughter of Mr and Mrs Leonard Bacon, of Bramhall, Cheshire.

Mr N.G. Atkins and Miss R.C. Bruce
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, only son of Mr Geoffrey Atkins, of Hayling Island, and the late Mrs Philippa Ryerson, and Rowena, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Nigel Bruce, of The Barn, Great Durnford, Salisbury.

Dr T.R. Auld and Dr M.C. Mathias
The engagement is announced between Tim, son of Sir Robin and Lady Auld, of London, and Mary, daughter of Mr David and Dr Isobel Mathias, of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Mr D. Boulter and Miss M.R. Sampson
The engagement is announced between David, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Boulter, of Haslemere, Surrey, and Matilda, daughter of Mr and Mrs Alistair Sampson, of Clifton Hill, London, NW8.

Mr A.M. Butchart and Miss J.L. Phelan
The engagement is announced between Andrew, elder son of Mr and Mrs M.D.L. Butchart, of Leatherhead, Surrey, and Joanna, daughter of Mr J.M. Phelan, of Swansea, and Mrs R.J. Phelan, of Toddington, Bedfordshire.

Mr S.W. Cook and Miss M.J. Denton
The engagement is announced between Stewart, eldest son of Lieutenant-Colonel P.W. Cook, retd, and Mrs Cook, of Tunbridge Wells, Kent, and Michelle, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs A.W. Denton, of Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire.

Mr S.M. Cammack and Miss N. Crossley Cooke
The engagement is announced between Simon, son of Mr and Mrs Donald Cammack, of Chigwell, Essex, and Nicola, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs David Crossley Cooke, of Little Coxwell, Oxfordshire.

Mr H.R.S. Clarke and Miss A.S.W. de Campi
The engagement is announced between Hugo, elder son of Mr and Mrs Rory Clarke, of Horsted Keynes, Sussex, and Alexandra, daughter of Mr and Mrs John de Campi, of Philadelphia, USA.

***Mr E.D.G. Gibbs* and Miss S.L. Rossington**
The engagement is announced between Edward, elder son of Mr and Mrs Simon Gibbs, of Charvil, Reading, Berkshire, and Sarah, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs John Rossington, of Alfreton, Derbyshire.

Mr P. Holland and Miss I.M. Cockayne
The engagement is announced between Paul, son of Mr and Mrs A.P. Holland, of St Etienne du Bois, France, and Sana'a, The Yemen, and Isabel, youngest daughter of Dr and Mrs E.E. Cockayne, of Woolpit, Suffolk.

Mr N.J. Joyce and Miss E.J. Warren
The engagement is announced between Nicholas, son of Mr and Mrs John Joyce, of St Mawes, Cornwall, and Emma, daughter of Mr and Mrs Douglas Warren, of Caerleon, South Wales.

Mr C. McVeigh and the Hon Sophia Baker
The engagement is announced between Charles, son of Mr Charles McVeigh, of Donhead Hall, Dorset, and of Mrs Pamela McVeigh, of Chelsea, London, and Sophia, daughter of Lord and Lady Baker of Dorking.

Mr S.H. O'Connell and Miss E.M. Melville
The engagement is announced between Sean, elder son of Mr and Mrs W.F. O'Connell, of Dubbo, NSW, Australia, and Elizabeth, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs A.E. Melville, of Cambridge. The marriage will take place in Australia.

High Sheriffs

The Queen in Council has appointed the following to be High Sheriffs in 1999:

ENGLAND (except Cornwall, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Lancashire)
Bedfordshire: Christopher Richard Kilroy, Oakley.
Berkshire: Michael John Benjamin Todhunter, Farnborough, Wantage, Oxfordshire.
Buckinghamshire: The Hon. Sir William Hepburn McAlpine, Fawley Nr Henley-on-Thames.
Cambridgeshire: John Edwin Heading, Catteris.
Cheshire: Miles David Astley Clarke, Malpas.
City of Bristol: John Richard Pool, Clifton, Bristol.
Cumbria: Arthur Ian Bullough, Walton, Brampton.
Derbyshire: Derrick Roch Penrose, Baslow, Bakewell.
Devon: Sir Simon James Day, Ermington, Ivybridge.
Dorset: Anthony Graham Yeatman, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne.
Durham: Frank Nicholson, Chester-le-Street.
East Riding of Yorkshire: Andrew Leslie Marr, Beverley.
East Sussex: Keith Malcolm Hedley Millar, Wadhurst.
Essex: George Ronald Capel Cure, Ongar.
Gloucestershire: The Hon Mark William Vestey, Andoversford, Cheltenham.
Greater London: Roger John Lawrence Bramble, London SW1.
Hampshire: Valentine Anthony Lewis Powell, Headbourne Worthy, Winchester.
Herefordshire: Mrs Rosalie Joan Dawes, Malvern, Worcestershire.
Hertfordshire: Harry Morton Neal, Sarratt, Rickmansworth.
Isle of Wight: Samuel Humfrey Gaskell Twining, St Lawrence, Near Ventnor.
Kent: John Bernard Sunley, Godmersham, near Canterbury.
Leicestershire: Mrs Allison Grahame Wilson, Gaulby, Near Billesdon, Leicester.
Lincolnshire: Francis John Fane Marmion Dymoke, Horncastle.
Norfolk: Neil William Derick Foster, East Lexham, King's Lynn.
Northamptonshire: David Reynolds, Weekley, Kettering.
Northumberland: Mrs Elizabeth Maureen Fairbairn, Hallington, Newcastle upon Tyne.
North Yorkshire: Andrew Vavasour Hudson, Hampsthwaite, Harrogate.
Nottinghamshire: Alexander Michael Nall, Hockerton.
Oxfordshire: Andrew James Felkin, Minster Lovell, Nr Witney.
Rutland: Mrs Wendy Margaret Lancaster Goldring, Preston, Oakham.
Shropshire: Jonathan Rupert Blakiston Lovegrove-Fielden, Pontesford, Shrewsbury.
Somerset: Thomas Andrew Heath Yandle, Exebridge, Dulverton.
South Yorkshire: David Baxter Shaw, Sheffield.
Staffordshire: David Edward Dunn Johnson, Stafford.
Suffolk: Colonel David Henry Charles Gordon Lennox, Great Saxham, Bury St Edmunds.
Surrey: Peter Robert Nutting, Ewhurst.
Tyne and Wear: Michael Bird, Church Road, Northumberland.
Warwickshire: Michael Charles Fetherston-Dilke, Coleshill.
West Midlands: Roger Stephen Burman, Holberrow Green, Inkberrow, near Redditch, Worcestershire.
West Sussex: Mrs Judith Buckland, Lyminster.
West Yorkshire: Peter Arthur Hillard Hartley, Leeds.
Wiltshire: Philip John Miles, Stanley, Chippenham.
Worcestershire: Mrs Rosalie Joan Dawes, Malvern.

WALES
Clwyd: Derwen Eurfyl Williams, St Asaph, Denbighshire.
Dyfed: Jonathan Michael Griffith Andrews, Taliaris, Llandeilo.
Gwent: Mrs Julia Clare Johnson, Llanvihangel, near Abergavenny.
Gwynedd: William David Innes Edwards, Rhosgoch, Amlwch, Anglesey.
Mid Glamorgan: David Hugh Thomas, Bridgend.
Powys: Jonathan Guy Colman-Rogers, Knighton.
South Glamorgan: Mrs Meriel Watkins, Penarth.
West Glamorgan: Henry Alfred Steane, Sketty, Swansea.

Duchy of Lancaster

The Queen has pricked the following names on the Lites to serve as High Sheriffs of the Duchy of Lancaster for the ensuing year:
Lancashire: Lady Shuttleworth, of Leck; Greater Manchester: Mr Norman Kelvin Stoller, of Lostock, Bolton; Merseyside: Mr Derek Hazlitt Morris, of Lydiate.

BMDS: 0171 680 6880
PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

TRADE; 0171 481 1982
FAX: 0171 481 9313

The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. Psalm 18.2 (NRSV).

BIRTHS

ASHBOLT - Oliver William came to stay, on February 6th a Saturday, a brother for Phoebe, and our first son, dad's doing well, and so is mum. Mark, Judy and Phoebe Ashbolt.

BUXTON - On March 6th 1999, at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, to Anne-Louise (née Reilly) and Richard a son, Dan Thomas.

CAPPI - On February 28th 1999, to Katy (née Boyles) and Graham, a beautiful daughter, Amelia Grace.

COYNE - On 6th March 1999 at The Royal Free Hampstead to Angela (née O'Driscoll) and David, a son, Matthew David, a *brother for Stephanie.*

GILDAY - On March 8th, to Siobhan (née Simpson-Nairn) and Ian, a daughter, Emily Cordelia Clare, a sister to Patrick and Dominic.

GILES - On February 27th, in Eastbourne, to Caroline and Nicholas, a daughter Charlotte Amelia Carmel, a sister for Philippa and James.

GOGGIN - On March 5th at The Portland Hospital, to *Evelyn (née Vicenzotti)* and Peter, a daughter, Olivia Daisy, a sister for Angela Rose.

HEYER - On 8th March at The Lindo Wing, St Mary's Hospital, to Kiss (née Gregersen) and Christian, a daughter, Natasha Sophia.

LYNCH - On March 7th at The Portland Hospital, to Jacqueline (née O'Donovan) and Martin, a son, Joseph Patrick.

BIRTHS

MAY - On March 6th at The Portland Hospital, to Mary O'Neill and Jeffrey May, a daughter, Olivia, a sister for Colin.

MONTERRUBIO - On March 7th at The Portland Hospital, to Maru and Miguel, a son, Mateo, a brother for Miguel.

RAMSAY - On February 25th, to Jane (née MacDonald) and Jamie, in Victoria, Canada, a son, George Arthur Erskine.

SHELBOURNE - On Saturday 6th March 6.44 pm, at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, to Melinda and Jasper, a beloved daughter, Amelia.

STANLEY - On March 8th, to Frances (née Roche) and Peter, a son, Algernon "Algy" Edmund.

WAINWRIGHT - To Tarja and Rupert a healthy baby boy Peter Glynn Alexander, on Wednesday 3rd March 1999 at 2:13 am 7lb 15 oz in Los Angeles, California.

WOLLOCOMBE - On February 27th at St Mary's Paddington, to Fiona (née Pearson) and John, a daughter, India Rose.

DEATHS

BOOTH - Gwendoline, passed away on Monday 8th March, mother of Elisabeth and William. Funeral on Thursday 18th *March at Corbitts Tey* Crematorium, Upminster, Essex at 10.30am.

COATES - Travers (Toby), suddenly on 7th March in his 82nd year. Much loved brother of John. Funeral service to be held at St Peter and St Paul Church, Teddington at 2.30pm on 15th March followed by private cremation. Family flowers only. Donations if desired, to St Peter and St Paul Church.

DEATHS

DICKIE - Peacefully in Edinburgh, on Monday 8th March 1999, Enid Marjorie beloved sister of Jean and Barbara. Funeral at Mortonhall Crematorium, Main Chapel, Edinburgh on 16th March at 12 noon to which all friends are respectfully invited. Family flowers only please, but donations if so desired to Spinal Injuries Scotland, 150 Bread Street, Glasgow G51 1DH.

FARRAR - Peter on 6th March 1999 aged 65, peacefully in Chelmsford, Essex, after a short illness. Adored father, grandfather, brother and friend.

FIGUEROA - John Joseph Maria, aged 78, died on 6th March 1999 at Milton Keynes General Hospital after a long illness. He leaves his beloved wife Dorothy Alexander; children, Anne and Del (Canada), Sr Catherine (Jamaica), Peter and Marceline (Ja), Robert (Denmark), Mark and Jennes (Ja), Esther (Hawaii); grandchildren, David, Alexei, Nadiya, Peetra, Jo, Nara and Stephan; predeceased by his son Thomas (1975). Also survived by his nine siblings and their families; in-laws; and countless other friends, colleagues and students. Funeral: 13th March at 11 am at St Mary's RC Church, Aspley Hill, Woburn Sands, followed by private cremation. Memorial service at 3 pm on 28th March at Saints Peter and Paul RC Church, Kingston, Jamaica. Family flowers only. Donations to Monastery of Christ our Saviour, Turvey, Bedfordshire.

HANKIN - Helen Elizabeth, peacefully with Sally in Devon on 9th March, aged 89. Widow of Arthur and beloved mother of Priscilla, Sally and Guy. Funeral at St Peter's, Milton Lilbourne on Wednesday 17th March at 2.30pm. No flowers.

HARLAND - Joan Mary peacefully on March 10th 1999 after a short illness. Beloved widow of Tom, much loved by Jane, Ann and Thomas and their families in England and Australia. Funeral Service at St Peter's, Stourton Caundle on Monday March 15th at 2.30 pm. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to R.N.L.I. c/o Peter Jackson F/S, tel: (01963) 362570.

HYMAN - The Hon. Mrs Laura Alice Hyman (née Boyd) died peacefully on February 25th; beloved of her family.

IRWIN - (Newcastle upon Tyne). On March 8th after an illness borne with characteristic bravery and humour, Anne, beloved aunt of Harley, Leslie and Aidan, great-aunt of William and Kitty and a much loved and admired friend. Funeral Service at All Saints Church, Gosforth on Monday March 15th at 2 pm. Private cremation. Flowers to John Bardgett & Sons, Westgate Road or donations to St Oswald's Hospice, Gosforth, Newcastle NE3 1EE or All Saints Church, West Avenue, Gosforth, Newcastle NE3 4ES.

JACOB - Elizabeth, formerly of Little Bealings on March 8th 1999 under the loving care of Aldringham Court, much loved Godmother of Clare, Christopher, Jake and Gillian. Funeral service at Holy Family & St Michael's Catholic Church, Kesgrave on Friday March 19th at 2.00pm, followed by cremation. Flowers or donations of your choice to Farthing, Singleton & Hastings, 650, Woodbridge Road, Ipswich, IP4 4PW.

JAMIESON - (Née Quinn) M.B.Ch.B. Anne Rosaleen. On March 4th 1999 peacefully at home after a short illness. Much loved wife of John and mother of Rose, Michael, Judith, Clare and George and beloved by 11 grandchildren. Requiem Mass at Our Lady & St Peter Catholic Church, Aldeburgh on Tuesday March 16th at 10 am, followed by private cremation. Flowers or donations made payable to Allington NHS Trust, c/o Tony Browns Funeral Service, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 1DJ.

JARVIS - Donald Edward Manners, died on 8th March 1999. Private cremation. No flowers please, but donations, if desired, to St Andrews Church, Rockbourne Restoration Fund (The Treasurer, J. Lobb, Braeside, Rockbourne, Hants. SP6 3NT). A Service of Thanksgiving *will be held* at St Andrews Church, Rockbourne, at 3pm on Friday, 26th March 1999.

KERR - Graham Gordon. Peacefully at Hilton Lodge, Haddington, on February 17th 1999, Graham Gordon Kerr, husband of the late Doris. Gordon was a much respected Past President of Edinburgh Wanderers FC from 1969 - 1976.

KING - Peacefully in Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley on 9th March 1999, Mary, beloved wife of the late Thomas George King (former Rector of Stoke Charity) and a much loved mother of Rosemary. Details of funeral arrangements from C.W.S., Paisley (0141) 889-6321.

KUBBA - M. Hassan Principal of Babel Technical College, on 9th March 1999, died peacefully at home, aged 63. Much loved and missed by family, friends and students. Enquiries, 0181 788 4242.

MACLEAN - Gordon, suddenly on March 4th aged 86. Much loved husband of Joan, father of Murray and Douglas and grandfather of Angus, Hamish, Andrew and Duncan. Service and cremation at Oxford Crematorium on Tuesday March 16th at 12 noon. Family flowers only, but donations to either the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Naturalists Trust Ltd or The Imperial Cancer Research Fund would be greatly appreciated c/o P L Barrett Funeral Directors, 81 Ock Street, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 5AG.

MAGUIRE - Lisnaskea, Co. Fermanagh, Northern Ireland on March 8th 1999, suddenly Raymond, R.I.P. Loving father of Sean and Vanessa (London). His funeral takes place today *Thursday after Requiem* Mass in Holy Cross Church, Lisnaskea. Very deeply regretted by his son Sean, daughter Vanessa and large circle of family and friends.

McALPIN - Jean, peacefully at Albury Hospital, Australia on 10th March. Dearly loved wife of Don, much loved Mummie of Jillie and much loved by Hugo, Rupert and Rachel.

McTAGGART - Agnes Marjorie (née Nancy Goldie) died at St Michael's Hospice Basingstoke on Wednesday 10th March 1999 aged 87. Much loved wife of Michael H. McTaggart and mother of Kate Allen and Isobel Rimmer. Funeral at St James' Woodmancote at 12 noon on Wednesday 17th March followed by family committal. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to St Michael's Hospice c/o Spencer & Peyton (01256) 333165.

MITCHELL - Leslie John, late of Burton Joyce, Nottingham, peacefully after a short illness at Devonshire Court, Oadby, on 6th March 1999. Dearly loved husband of Kathleen and father of Peter, Janet and Alice, grandfather and great-grandfather. Private family funeral. Memorial Service at St Helen's, Burton Joyce, Nottingham on 26th March 1999 at noon. *Enquiries to The* Guildhall, Bardwell, Bury St Edmunds IP31 1AL, tel: (01359) 251378.

MOULTON - Barbara Aline, peacefully in The Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath on 9th March 1999. Devoted wife of the late Jim Moulton (Major General RM), beloved mother of Caroline and Robert, and grandmother of Leonie, Eleanor and Clio. Will be sadly missed by all family and friends. Funeral Service at Woodvale Crematorium, Brighton on Wednesday 17th March at 1.30 pm. Family flowers only, but donations, if desired, for St Dunstans may be sent to Bowley Funeral Service, 30 Keymer Road, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8AN, tel: 01273 841711.

MORRIS - Denis Edward Morris OBE *formerly of* Findon, Sussex, peacefully on March 8th in his 92nd year. Much loved husband of Catharine, father, father-in-law and grandfather. Funeral service 2pm, All Saints Church, Crondall on Tuesday 16th March. Family flowers only. *Donations if desired* to St Bridgets Cheshire Home, Ilex Close, Rustington, W Sussex BN16 2RX.

WESTELL - On March 5th suddenly but peacefully at Warwick Hospital, John Theodore Rex aged 86 years. Beloved husband of Betty and dearly loved father of Michael. All enquiries to A.E. Bennett & Sons (01789) 267035.

THANKSGIVING SERVICES

GORDON - A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Adam London Gordon MBE, Major (retd), Royal Norfolk Regiment, will be held at St Mary's Church, Rock Gardens, Brighton on Friday 9th April at 2pm. Friends welcome.

IN MEMORIAM - PRIVATE

BEATTIE - Cherished memories of Peter Henry. A very dear husband and father died 11th March 1994.

HALLE - Bill, Artist, died 11th March 1998 missed by his friends.

POND - Tania, 11.3.89. Every day with love we remember. May God hold you in the hollow of His hand. Mummy, Daddy, Francis.

BIRTHDAYS

ZORRO, Belated happy birthday, and thank you Mr G for the best year ever. Love you always S.

OBITUARIES

CARMEN GRONAU

Carmen Gronau, former head of the Old Master Pictures Department at Sotheby's, died on February 15 aged 88. She was born on October 8, 1910 at Freiburg-im-Breisgau.

Carmen Gronau was passionate about good paintings, and had the great gift of spotting the quality of a picture, the degree of its importance and hence its potential value on the market. In the postwar art market, as head of Old Master pictures at Sotheby's, she helped the auction house to rival Christie's in her field for the first time, and to increase the excitement and the value of the entire market.

Gronau was short and severe-looking, with dark wiry hair and piercing brown eyes behind heavy glasses. She could be heard from a considerable distance talking fluently and emphatically in English, German, French or Italian, and her restless energy and natural authority combined to make sure that her presence could not be ignored. But she also had a great sense of humour and was a most loyal and generous friend.

Carmen Ida Joachim von Wogau was brought up at Lilienhof, a wine-growing estate overlooking the Rhine near Freiburg. Her father, Max von Wogau, was a Volga German who had inherited large business interests in Russia, but he lost them during the Revolution and his fortune was severely depleted. He married Carmen Devaux, who came from a prominent Anglo-French family, and their daughter Carmen was treated just like her two brothers: educated at the Gymnasium and then at the local university.

She showed a great aptitude for art history and moved on to Göttingen, where she studied under Nikolaus Pevsner. From there she went to Florence to pursue her research on the Florentine artist Il Cigoli. In 1933 she fell in love with Hans Gronau, son of the eminent art historian Georg Gronau; the former director of the Kassel Art Gallery, who had by then retired and was living in Florence.

Once married, the couple settled briefly in Freiburg, where their elder son was born, but then Carmen went out of curiosity to hear Hitler speak at a local rally. She was so appalled that she persuaded her husband (who was half Jewish) that they must move to England immediately. Her English cousins helped them to settle in, and work was found for her husband as an adviser to art dealers.

When war came, he was interned on the Isle of Man, but he was then released and joined the Pioneer Corps. To escape from the Blitz, meanwhile, Carmen took their two sons to Beckley Manor in Oxfordshire, which they shared with Basil Fielding's family.



After the war, Hans Gronau was recommended to Sotheby's as a picture cataloguer, to replace Tancred Borenius, who by this time was not at all reliable on attributions and had become too grand to do the work of cataloguing. Sotheby's, which had begun as a book auction house, had never been much known for its picture sales — the more aristocratic Christie's was then the place for Old Master paintings, and even in the 1930s the contents of country houses would routinely be divided between the two — but the board was determined to change this.

In the early 1950s Hans Gronau became ill with a congenital heart condition and was told that he should not lift paintings or go up and down stairs, so his wife went in to Sotheby's to do the donkey work. As his condition worsened, she gradually took over the cataloguing, and when he died in 1951 the directors asked her to stay on. She was herself to become a director in 1958 — at that time a highly unusual appointment for a woman.

Her intelligence and flair were especially noticed by Peter Wilson, the most ambitious of the younger directors, who had become Chairman of Sotheby's in 1957. As a team, the two were formidable. Wilson had a brilliant eye for objects (though not so much for pictures), a taste for deal-making and colossal charm. Gronau brought a great knowledge of pictures, a cataloguer's training, language skills and very good European connections. Both had plenty of courage, and though inclined to prima donna-ish behaviour, they were always attentive to other people's expertise and keen to promote the younger members of the firm as specialists.

The story of the rise and rise of Sotheby's under Peter Wilson is well charted. Gronau was closely involved, and thrived on the challenge. She ran the department of Old Master pictures (which then included Old Master drawings) with a certain strictness, but she was just as firm with clients as with her own staff. If people were a nuisance or the picture was poor, she was brusque; if she liked the picture, then a doubting or recalcitrant vendor would be won over by equal measures of pressure and charm.

The 1960s and very early 1970s were perhaps the most exciting time to be working at Sotheby's, but the rapid growth of the firm meant new preoccupations and new alliances, which loosened the Wilson-Gronau link. After a serious illness Gronau was persuaded, against her wishes, to step aside from running the department. She moved her base to Florence, where she had opened a Sotheby's office some years previously, following the spectacular success of Prince Paul of Yugoslavia's house sale at Pratolino.

Though she still travelled frequently, it was now from her office in the Palazzo Capponi and her villa at San Domenico. This stunning property, bought in the 1890s by her father-in-law, gave a perfect, uninterrupted view over Florence, and the *podere*, falling steeply away from the terrace down to the Via Farentina, was quite magical. The house was full of interesting and diverse visitors, for she loved entertaining. Though fond of Harold Acton and John Pope-Hennessy, she was never entirely at ease in the Anglo-Florentine circle, but she welcomed visiting academics, collectors, art dealers, anybody from Sotheby's and, of course, her own relatives and her children's friends.

After the early loss of her husband, she faced further tragedy, with both of her sons, Peter and Philip, dying in their mid forties of the same heart disease. She was naturally deeply affected by this, though she took consolation from the affection of her five grandchildren. One of them, Amanda, moved to Italy after Philip's death, and looked after her devotedly.

COMMODORE WILLIAM WARWICK





The Cunard liner *Queen Elizabeth 2*, Warwick in command, is escorted into New York Harbour on May 8, 1969

Commodore William Warwick, CBE, RD, Master of the Cunard liner *Queen Elizabeth 2*, 1966-72, died on February 27 aged 86. He was born on November 12, 1912.

THE first Master of the liner *Queen Elizabeth 2*, the 1960s state-of-the-art successor to the Cunard "Queens" of the prewar era — *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth* — William Warwick was nevertheless a master mariner of the old school. A burly figure with full naval "set" of beard and moustache, he epitomised the seadog of yore, and was respected throughout the merchant marine for his seamanship and his unflappable temperament.

The *QE2*, as she soon became known, was considerably smaller than her famous predecessors. The three-stacker *Queen Mary*, launched in 1934, one-time holder of the Atlantic Blue Riband, was 1,019 feet long and of 81,000 tons gross tonnage. The two-stacker *Queen Elizabeth*, 1,031 feet and 83,000 tons, launched in 1938, was the largest passenger ship ever built. Yet at only 963 feet long and 65,000 tons, the *QE2* could accommodate virtually the same number of passengers as the earlier Queens.

Warwick, whose nickname Bil was always spelt with one "l" on his insistence, had been named Master of the *QE2* in 1966 while she was still under construction on the Clyde. Following an old (and sound) tradition, he "stood by" his ship as she neared completion at the John Brown shipyard, inspecting developments at every stage. "My intention is that nobody will know the ship better than I do," he said at the time.

But even his knowledgeable surveillance could not prevent the problems with the ship's engines which delayed her maiden voyage for four months. A December 1968 pre-maiden cruise with 500 guinea pig passengers aboard was cut short when the ship developed turbine blade trouble and had to limp back from the Canary Islands to Southampton at low speed. Cunard then refused to accept the liner without conducting vigorous sea trials of its own.

It was not until April 1969 that the problems had been ironed out and Warwick was able to take her to sea on an eight-day proving voyage to the tropics and back. Only at the end of that high-speed cruise, during which the engines had sustained the *QE2* at speeds of 32 knots for periods of six hours on end, did Cunard's chairman, Sir Basil Smallpeice, profess himself contented with his new flagship.

Warwick was then able to get down to the serious business of commercial sailing: QE2 made her maiden voyage proper, a cruise to Las Palmas, Tenerife and Lisbon, in the second half of April. Her maiden Atlantic crossing took place the following month, *QE2* making the passage from Le Havre to the Ambrose Light, New York Bay, in 4 days 16 hours and 39 minutes. Her reception in New York Harbour was a spectacular affair. A fleet of more than fifty small boats escorted her up the fairway, tugs whistled, half a dozen fireboats sprayed honorific fountains in the air and crowds of sightseers gathered on the Manhattan and New Jersey shores. Mayor Lindsay went aboard the ship from a coastguard cutter and finished the voyage in her.

William Eldon Warwick was born in Birkenhead, the son of an architect. He was educated at Birkenhead from where he went to the merchant navy training ship *Conway*. He joined the Merchant Service in 1928 and for the next few years served in the Indian Ocean and Red Sea. He was awarded his Master Mariner's Certificate in 1936 and the following year joined Cunard White Star as a junior officer in the 16,000-ton passenger liner *Lancastria*. In 1937 he was also commissioned in the Royal Naval Reserve.

When war broke out in 1939 he was mobilised for service in the Royal Navy. His next six years were ones of active sea duty. In the early part of the war he served in coastal forces in the Channel and thereafter in corvettes on escort duties on North Atlantic convoys and on the Murmansk route. Later he took part in operations to support the Normandy Landings.

Warwick was mentioned in dispatches in 1946.

Returning to Cunard after demobilisation as a lieutenant-commander, in the early 1950s Warwick had his first command, that of the cargo ship *Alsatia*. His first passenger vessel command was *Carinthia* in 1958. He went on to command almost every passenger liner in the Cunard fleet including *Media*, *Ivernia*, *Caronia*, *Franconia* and *Mauretánia*. He was also staff captain and relief Master of the *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth*. During his three years' sea service as Master of *QE2* he welcomed royalty, world leaders and famous names from the worlds of showbusiness and industry to join him at his captain's table. In 1970 he was promoted Commodore, retiring from Cunard in 1975. He had been promoted Captain, RNR, in 1960, five years before he retired from the Reserve.

In retirement Warwick was a treasurer of the International Federation of Shipmasters' Association, a Younger Brother of Trinity house, a Liveryman of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners and a Freeman of the City of London. He was appointed CBE in 1971

Warwick was proud of his connection with the *QE2*: "People simply marvelled at her wherever she went," he recalled. And he was particularly proud of the day in 1990 when his second son Ronald was also appointed master of the ship, a command he holds to this day.

Warwick was expected in Southampton next month to join his son in the *QE2* for a special anniversary transatlantic crossing to commemorate the 30 years she has been plying between Southampton and New York.

William Warwick is survived by his wife Evelyn, and by three sons.

ADRIAN LOVE

Adrian Love, radio DJ, died yesterday following a lung collapse aged 54. He was born on August 3, 1944.



Love in his studio at Classic FM in 1992

A RADIO presenter for more than 30 years, Adrian Love was in on the ground floor of popular radio entertainment. In the course of his varied career he worked for the London stations LBC and Capital Radio; for BBC Radio 1 and Radio 2; and for Jazz FM London and Classic FM.

Educated at Tottenham Grammar School, he was the elder son of the bandleader Geoff Love. His first job was as a tailor for Burton's. He eventually ventured into the world of broadcasting in 1966 with the pirate radio station Radio City. He was on air the day after his interview, and later told a colleague of his dread at reading the news on that first day: "I've never been so scared in all my life. There were three Russian names in the first story."

He moved to the BBC Light Programme in 1967, and after stints on the BBC World Service, LBC and the United Biscuits Network, Love joined London's Capital Radio in 1976. Here he became the presenter of the station's *Open Line*, a weekly show which invited listeners to call in with their physical and emotional problems.

His five years here as an agony uncle earned him considerable notoriety. He once told a Jamaican caller who was complaining about benefit fraud: "Nobody asked you to come here", insisting he was allowed to say this because one of his own ancestors was a slave. And in 1978, when a young wife phoned him for advice on her separation, he announced his own divorce from his wife Barbara, live in front of his 150,000 audience.

The Labour MP and former Arts Minster Hugh Jenkins attacked radio phone-in programmes such as his for being "ignorant and bigoted". Nevertheless Love's popularity led to a break on national radio when in 1980 he joined Radio 1. A year later his *Talkabout* show won the Pye Award for best children's programme, though Love always said his most memorable moment from his stint there was a one-hour interview special he did with Peter Ustinov.

He was sacked in 1982 after hosting a show while drunk, and two years later he went public about his alcohol problem. He gave up drinking in 1984.

After a spell at LBC, Love returned to the BBC in 1987. Here his Radio 2 *Love in the Afternoon* show boasted more than three million listeners, though he was one of several of the station's old guard sacked three years later when a modernising new controller took charge. He subsequently worked for Jazz FM London and, from September 1992 to August 1993, for the newly-launched Classic FM. He later returned to local radio, playing golden oldies on numerous stations in Surrey and Sussex.

A life-long asthmatic, he was involved in a car crash in 1997 which led to the collapse of one of his lungs. He died after a second lung collapse.

Adrian Love married three times. He is survived by his third wife Ros Roux, whom he married in 1990; by a daughter and stepdaughter of that marriage; and by the daughter of his second marriage.

PROFESSOR ANDREW KELLER

Professor Andrew Keller, FRS, polymer scientist, died on February 7 aged 73. He was born on August 22, 1925.



PLASTICS such as polyethylene may seem mundane to most people, but Andrew Keller and his colleagues found an astonishing beauty at their heart. To him, these everyday materials were undiscovered realms which demanded an entirely new understanding and way of picturing their make-up. In opening up this world, he created a new visual branch of physics, concerned with polymer microstructures. He was a scientist not driven by mathematics or equations, but inspired by pictures, diagrams and shapes.

Born András Keller in Budapest, he left Hungary in 1948 before finishing his doctorate in chemistry. The political climate in Hungary was rapidly deteriorating, and it was to be many years before he could return again to the country of his birth.

In Britain, he worked for a short period for ICI before joining the physics department in Bristol, where he set about unravelling the mysterious way in which long chain polymer molecules crystallise to form solid plastic materials.

He simplified the problem by studying the way polymer crystallises from solution rather than from the melt. Then, using the recently developed art of electron microscopy, he discovered very thin and equally beautiful single crystals of polyethylene. While these single crystals were also observed by others in 1956, he went a stage further. By studying the electron diffraction pattern he concluded that the long chain polymer molecules must crystallise in a regular chain folded manner, in a fashion similar to a string of Chinese firecrackers. This simple but crucial discovery now underpins a large branch of polymer science and technology. So absorbed was he in his subject that when driving to conferences he would occasionally turn to his passenger and forget all about the road.

His unconventional, non-mathematical style was reflected in his presentation of research, and his Hungarian flavoured English ensured that his lectures were always memorable. He was appointed research professor in polymer science at Bristol in 1969. He received many scientific awards, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1972. His interests ranged from the microstructure of rat tails to the thermodynamics of phase transitions.

His wife Eva died in 1997; he is survived by a son and a daughter.

ON THIS DAY

March 11, 1891

This was one of many accounts of the devastation caused and lives lost in the gale, sent in by correspondents from all over Britain.

GREAT GALE AND SNOWSTORM

Our Dover Correspondent telegraphed last night:-

One of the most violent hurricanes ever experienced in the Channel occurred during Monday night and this morning. The strength of the wind gradually increased until between 6 and 7 o'clock, when it was blowing with terrific force, and a blizzard set in and continued beyond midnight. The streets at Dover presented a desolate appearance, and the snow completely blocked up the windows of buildings exposed to the drift. So fierce was the wind on the sea front that it was next to impossible to walk against it. For hours together every place was enveloped in a thick veil of sharp frozen particles of ice and snow, which beat into people's faces like so many pins. The snow in many places in the town was two or three feet deep.

The reports from the country today are very serious. All the mail services by road have been entirely stopped, those reaching their destination arriving by train. In one village near Dover it is reported that some of the villagers had to dig themselves out of their cottages through 12ft. of snow. The trains on both lines have been greatly delayed. The earliest train reaching Dover from London this morning arrived about 11 o'clock, being two hours late. It was reported that in some of the cuttings, notably near Shepherd's Well, the drifts through which the trains had to pass were 14 ft high. Very serious damage has been done to the fruit orchards, branches of trees being strewn about in all directions.

The most exciting experiences of all, however, were in the neighbourhood of the harbour and the Admiralty pier, where some few persons ventured to brave the night through in watching the disastrous effects of the storm, the sea frequently submerging the Admiralty pier. A series of exciting incidents occurred here at 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon, when the Paris club train arrived from London, amongst the passengers being the Duchess of Edinburgh and suite and Lady Rothschild. The *Petrel*, one of the small steamers, was to perform the journey to Calais. The passengers proceeded on board, but on her Royal Highness offering, it is stated, some objection to a small boat it was decided to replace the *Petrel* by the *Victoria*. The passengers therefore came ashore again. In the meantime the gale was increasing, and the greatest possible difficulty was experienced in getting the vessel alongside the landing, no less than two hours being taken in performing this task. The Duchess then decided not to cross in such a fearful storm, and proceeded to the Lord Warden Hotel, some 30 or 40 of the passengers doing the same. Ultimately the *Victoria* left, with only 20 passengers. At a quarter past 5 the *Calais-Douvres* hove in sight of the pier, and the violence of wind and sea may be gathered when it is stated that not until 8 o'clock could she be moored. Those who assisted to get her alongside stated that never in their whole experience have they seen such a fearful hurricane. Rope after rope was broken in the attempt to get her alongside the landing stage, notwithstanding it was on the lee side of the pier, and it was feared once or twice that she must be driven ashore . . .

NEWS

Fines for traders who overcharge

■ A nationwide assault on high prices was promised by the Government yesterday as part of a package to boost competition and enterprise.

The Trade Secretary is taking new powers to tackle retailers and utility companies who charge more for their goods than their counterparts do overseas, and companies face heavy fines if they breach anti-competition rules ....Pages 1, 4

Budget leaflet 'is hiding tax rises'

■ Gordon Brown's presentation of the Budget was referred to the public spending watchdog amid accusations that the Chancellor was misleading millions of voters. Francis Maude, the Shadow Chancellor, claimed that a leaflet explaining Budget measures to the public, and produced with taxpayers' money, amounted to "Labour Party propaganda" ....Pages 1, 10, 11

Prince does the tango

At the height of a delicate mission to mend fences with our former adversary Argentina, the Prince of Wales allowed himself to be lured onto a dance floor to do the tango ....Pages 1, 3

Rapist escapes jail

A rapist who bombarded his victim with threatening letters and set fire to her house escaped from prison, seven months after he was made a "trusted" inmate ...Page 1

Geldof reaps £6m

Bob Geldof and the Labour Peer Lord Waheed Alli are expected to receive up to £6 million each from the sale of their *Planet 24*, television company to Carlton Communications ....Page 2

Catwalk lures Camilla

Camilla Parker Bowles has joined the ranks of glamorous film stars who frequent international fashion shows ....Page 3

Body left for months

A former model has been found dead in her flat, where her body was left for up to three months. Neighbours claimed that her "friends" continued to use the flat to inject heroin ....Page 3

Pollock digitised

Hundreds of photographs and films documenting Jackson Pollock at work on his paintings have been fed into a computer, suggesting that his art was not as abstract as it seems ....Page 5

School racism claim

Many schools are institutionally racist, inspectors said after criticising underachievement among ethnic minority pupils ......Page 6

London flood plan

A network of 50 boreholes, able to siphon off billions of litres of water a year, is to be drilled to save the *London*'s buildings and underground network ......Page 9

Britons back boxer

British boxing fans will start arriving in New York today to support Lennox Lewis as he battles to become the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world ....Page 13

Congo expels envoy

A British diplomat was accused of spying and expelled from the Democratic Republic of the Congo as Foreign Office officials continued to negotiate for the release of four Britons and an American held since Sunday ....Page 14

Electric bike push

Lee Iacocca, the former Chrysler chairman, has sunk several million dollars into an ambitious scheme to sell 1,000 electric bikes a week ....Page 15

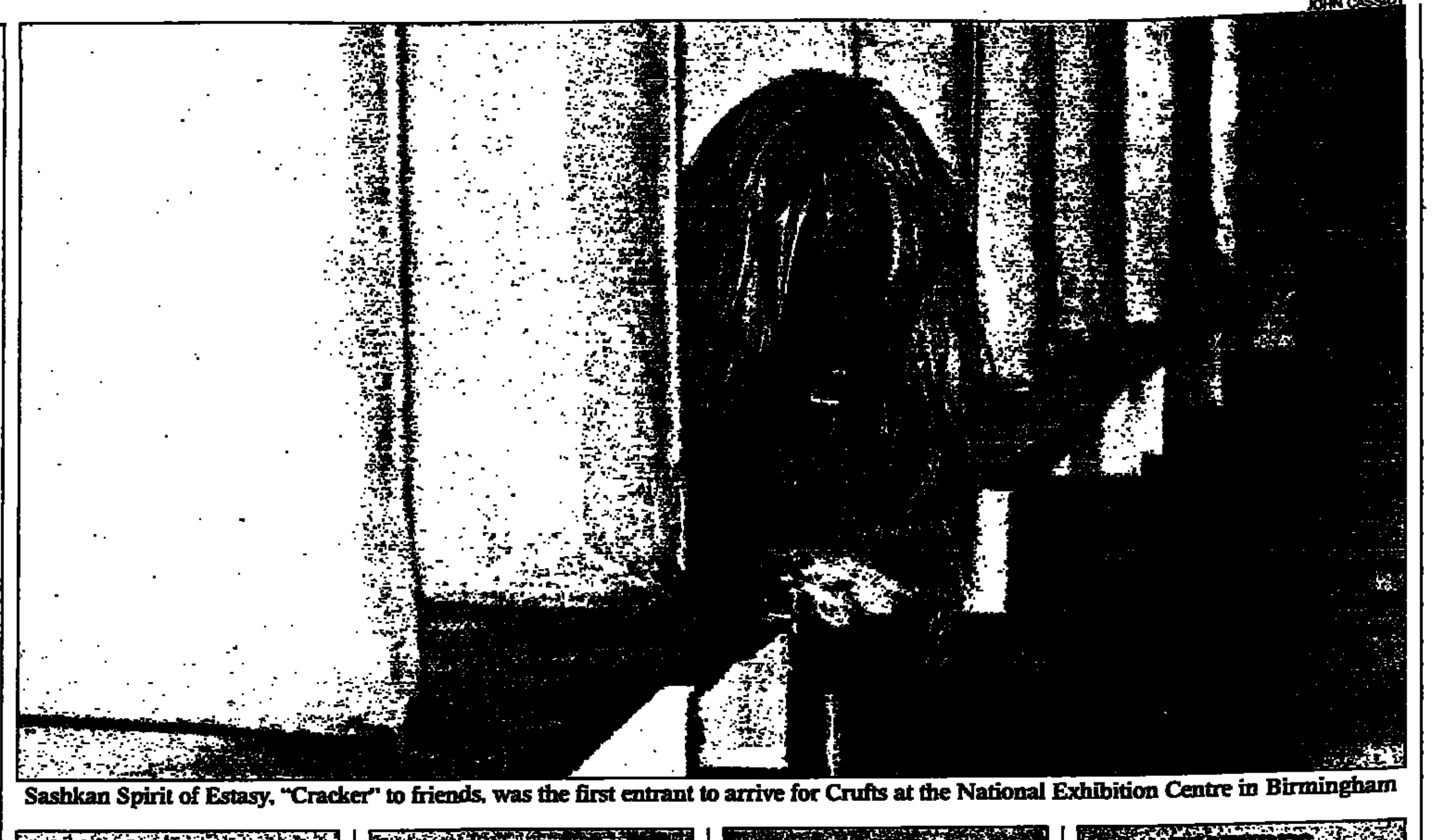
Tibet uprising alert

With China on full alert in Tibet for the 40th anniversary of the uprising that led to the Dalai Lama's exile, the spiritual leader said that Beijing was not prepared to hold talks ....Page 18

Hypnosis is last gasp for smokers

If the people who packed a theatre for a display of mass hypnosis are to be believed, 700 men and women gave up smoking yesterday. Cigarette butts littered the pavement outside the New London theatre as hundreds of smokers took what they hoped would be their last nicotine fix while queueing to see the hypnotist Paul McKenna ....Page 7

JOHN CASSIDY



Sashkan Spirit of Estasy, "Cracker" to friends, was the first entrant to arrive for Crufts at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham

BUSINESS

Package: The Government unveiled measures to help business, especially small business, boost competitiveness ....Page 27

BNP bid: France's banking sector was in shock after Banque Nationale de Paris launched a hostile £22.7 billion bid to take over two of its biggest rivals, Société Générale and Paribas ....Page 27

James Archer: The Swedish authorities yesterday said that James Archer, the City trader and son of novelist Jeffery, was not authorised to trade on the Stockholm Stock Exchange ....Page 27

Markets: The FTSE 100 index fell 16.50 points to 6221.2. The pound rose 0.23 cents to $1.6273 and 0.11p against the euro to 67.32p. The sterling index rose to 102.7 ......Page 30

Football: In the dressing-rooms at Old Trafford, Highbury and Stamford Bridge it has always been accepted that six defeats are as many as a championship winner can sustain ....Page 52

Boxing: Ray Mercer, one of only two opponents that Lennox Lewis and Evander Holyfield have in common, thinks that Lewis will win the world championship ....Page 49

Racing: The jockeys Dean Gallagher and Ray Cochrane spoke of their relief and joy after being eliminated from the police's long running race-fixing investigation ....Page 45

Bryant's Eye: The latest frontier in the battle for the super-fit body is lung power and the latest weapon is a device which is said to act like a dumb-bell for the lungs .....Page 50

Cinema 1: She's played the wife in *Nixon*, *The Crucible* and *The Ice Storm*, and now Joan Allen has done it again in *Pleasantville*. But Hollywood's favourite spouse doesn't mind ....Page 36

Cinema 2: Robin Williams sets the medical world to rights in *Patch Adams*, and *Pleasantville* is both paradise lost and paradise found. New movies reviewed ....Page 37

Spanish steps: When Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu burnt down in 1994, plans were quickly laid for reconstruction. Now the new opera house is almost ready ....Page 38

Model actor: In Esther Vilar's play *Speer* at the Almeida, Klaus Maria Brandauer manages to upstage the model of the Nazi architect's planned Germania ....Page 39

FEATURES

Dr Thomas Stuttaford: Babies and jaundice; a new comb that kills lice; James Major and postural hypotension; transient ischaemic attacks; and conditions that affect driving ability ....Page 20

Gullible: Albert Speer was a man with a fear of society's gullibility towards charismatic leaders and a far cry from the character depicted in a play on in London, says Gitta Sereny, author of a biography of Hitler's "great manager" ...Page 21

Reviews: How low can she go? Pulitzer Prize winner Natalie Angier's dumbing-down dismays Marianne Wiggins; Malcolm Bradbury peeps into the home life of the Marquis de Sade; Erica Wagner reviews Andrew Morton's Monica Lewinsky biography ....Pages 40, 41

Best buys: Walking through the Lake District; camping on the Costa Brava; catching Kerla before it becomes too busy ....Page 44

The Dalai Lama has been obstinate in his vain attempt to gain "Tibetan independence". During the past four decades, the Dalai Lama has changed some of his tactics, but his attempts to split Tibet from the motherland have remained unchanged. He has busied himself in various splittist activities.

The China Daily

THE ADVERTISING ARCHIVES

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

■ **EXECUTIVES**
The effect of the long-hours culture on the family, and other aspects of office life

■ **EDUCATION**
A preview of the 1999 national curriculum tests for ages 7 and 11

RADIO & TV

Preview: *Dispatches* casts its critical eye over the genetically-modified food debate. (Channel 4, 9.30pm) **Review:** Joe Joseph analyses the underbelly of Europe's drug capital, Amsterdam .... Pages 50, 51

OPINION

China worries

Every so often, popular disquiet about a particular foreign policy can throw grit into an American presidential campaign. Bill Clinton's "strategic partnership" with China could be turning into just such a piece of grit ....Pafe 23

The Byers market

Sharpening competition is a noble aim but will require further reform if it is to be realised ....Page 23

Jack the Dripper

There will be visitors to the Jackson Pollock retrospective who see nothing but cold macaroni. Others will be awed by the energy, confounded by a scary sense of void .....Page 23

COLUMNS

PETER RIDDELL

The mystery over the meaning of New Labour/Third Way has been solved. Gordon Brown's Budget speech provided the fullest definition of those elusive terms, even if the Chancellor himself is too fastidious to allow the words Third Way to pass his lips ....Page 11

ANATOLE KALETSKY

A politician at the peak of his popularity and power faces an obvious problem: there is nowhere to go but down. This surely ought to be a worry for Gordon Brown ....Page 22

MAGNUS LINKLATER

Standing on a hillside in Orkney last weekend, I marvelled at how the farmers hang on ....Page 22

DAVID HART

Many commentators refer disparagingly to the continuing operations against Iraq as an "undeclared war". Most wars are never declared, they just begin ....Page 22

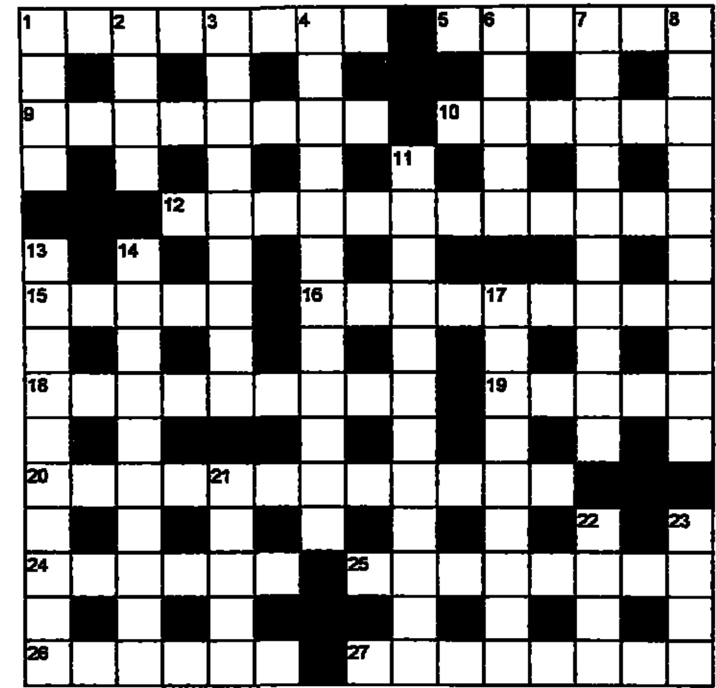
OBITUARIES

Carmen Gronau, former director of Sotheby's; **Commodore William Warwick**, Master of the QE2; **Adrian Love**, disc jockey; **Professor Andrew Keller**, scientist ....Page 25

LETTERS

Budget criticism; laptops for teachers; regional accents; Jenner's brown cow; bishops in the House of Lords; BBC "put-downs" ...Page 23

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,048



ACROSS

1 Desire a piano, small and dainty (8).
5 A way into mine over the hill (4,2).
9 Toughened girl got better after ditching husband (8).
10 Empty words in latest song (3,3).
12 Like a few short of money, shifted into profession (12).
15 Conductor describing Purcell's work for St. Cecilia's Day (5).
16 Offensive weapon permit held – what an obscenity (9).
18 Money owed round university, a gambling sum – one was brought to court (9).
19 Boasting about home wins (5).
20 It's rude to stop working without consent (12).
24 After a short time, firing becomes stressful (6).
25 Strong criticism of ethnic group after assistance is rejected (8).
26 Show hide to vet (6).
27 Advanced in party initially, without much energy (8).

DOWN

1 It's a separate state, unfortunately (4).
2 Knock and slightly wound (4).
3 Doll found in the Easter collection (9).
4 Workers' joint units producing something wonderful (3,4,5).
6 In Asian city, you'll find old marketplace (5).
7 Magic trio moved around clubs, arousing mixed emotions (10).
8 Jeremiah, for one, confused Ted, in short (10).
11 People selfish today – conclusion of my parents' meeting (2,10).
13 Frank married off friends to eligible people (10).
14 Seeing American teenager, policeman soundly beats her (5-5).
17 Central part in Verdi I perform, allowed to take title role (9).
21 Information about a type of painting (5).
22 Green half of Irish town (4).
23 Parking in Paris is a nuisance (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 21,047

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CLIO BACKSTITCH
 L R O  E I O E
SYNTAX ELECTRON
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Times Two Crossword, page 52

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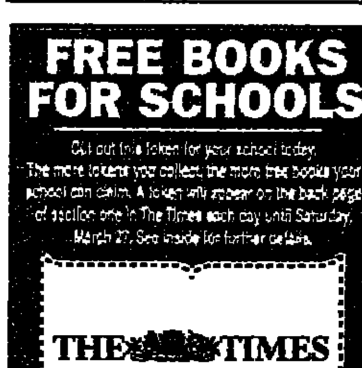
HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 6.24 am Sun sets: 5.57 pm

Moon sets: 11.10 pm Moon rises: 2.24 am

New moon March 17

London 5.57 pm to 6.22 am
Bristol 6.07 pm to 6.32 am
Edinburgh 6.07 pm to 6.37 am
Manchester 6.05 pm to 6.32 am
Penzance 6.20 pm to 6.44 am





☐ **General:** much of England and Wales will start cold and frosty but cloud will build in southwest, bringing rain to South Wales and southern England, which will spread north, and it will turn milder. Another band of rain will spread across Scotland and N Ireland; any snow mainly confined to the peaks. Blustery showers in far NW.

Tonight, rain in NW Scotland, falling as snow on hills and mountains. E Scotland cold and largely dry with clear breaks leading to frost. North Wales, N Midlands and E England largely dry with clear spells. Cloud will roll in off the Channel, with rain arriving in the south and west during the early hours, possibly reaching South Wales before dawn.

☐ **London, SE England:** bright at first, a few sunny spells, but rain in afternoon. Light SE wind. Max 10C (50F)
☐ **E Anglia, Midlands:** bright at first with a few sunny spells, but rain this afternoon. Light SE wind. Max 10C (50F)
☐ **Cent S, SW Eng, S Wales:** rain will spread N and E; drier, brighter in afternoon. Light, variable wind. Max 9C (48F)
☐ **E, NW Cent N England, N Wales:** cold, bright with sunny spells; rain in afternoon. Light S wind. Max 8C (46F)
☐ **Channel Is:** early cloud, rain; drier, bright later. Light S wind. Max 11C (52F)
☐ **Lakes, IoM, NE Eng:** early sun; cloud, rain in afternoon and evening. Light/mod S wind. Max 7C (45F)
☐ **NE Eng:** early sun; cloud and rain later. Light/mod S wind. Max 7C (45F)
☐ **Brdrs, E'burgh & Dundee:** mainly dry with bright or sunny spells, but rain in afternoon and evening. Fresh to strong SE wind. Max 7C (45F)
☐ **A'deen, Mry Frth, NE Scotld, Orkney, Shetld:** dry at first with bright, sunny spells; rain in afternoon and evening. Fresh/strong SE wind. Max 7C (45F)
☐ **SW, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Cent Highlands, Argyll:** rain clearing; then sunshine and showers. Fresh S to SW wind. Max 7C (45F)
☐ **N Ireland:** rain, then sunshine and showers. Mod SW wind. Max 9C (48F)
☐ **Republic of Ireland:** bright morning, cloudy afternoon with some rain. Mod S wind. Max 10C (50F)

☐ **Outlook:** overnight mist and fog will clear, and tomorrow will be quite mild with sunny spells; showers in north and west, turning wintry on hills and mountains. Saturday mild and sunny in south but showers in Scotland and N Ireland.

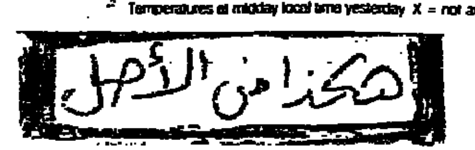
24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright, c=cloud; d=drizzle, ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair, fg=fog; g=gales, h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	2.2	0.04	6	43	sh
Anglesey	8.3	0.01	8	46	s
Aspatria	5.9	-	8	46	s
Aviemore	6.3	-	6	43	s
Belfast	7.6	-	8	46	s
Birmingham	3.8	0.07	7	45	b
Bognor R	9.1	-	9	48	s
Bournemth	5.2	-	8	46	s
Bristol	-	-	7	45	c
Buxton	5.7	0.06	5	41	s
Cardiff	0.4	0.01	7	45	c
Clacton	4.3	-	6	43	s
Cleethorpes	5.8	0.01	7	45	s
Colwyn Bay	9.3	0.03	7	45	s
Cromer	6.0	0.20	7	45	s
Eastbourne	8.6	-	9	48	s
Edinburgh	3.4	0.02	7	45	b
Eskdalemuir	4.4	-	6	43	s
Exmouth	5.5	-	6	43	s
Fishguard	4.0	-	7	45	b
Folkestone	5.6	-	9	48	b
Glasgow	6.5	-	9	48	s
Guernsey	6.3	0.05	10	50	s
Hastings	9.0	-	9	48	s
Hayling I.	7.7	-	9	48	s
Herne Bay	4.2	-	7	45	b
Hove	7.4	-	10	50	s
Hunstanton	7.7	0.22	6	43	s

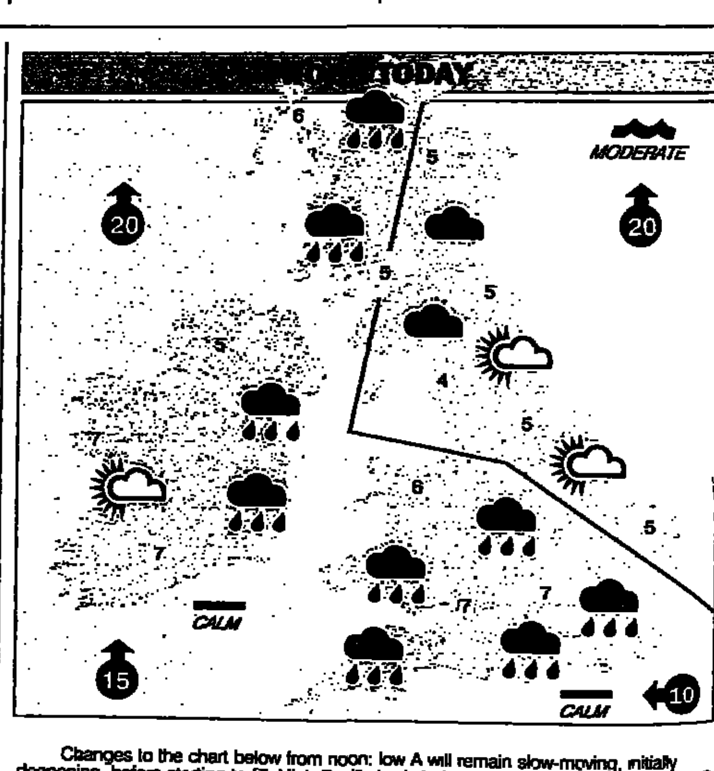
	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Isle of Man	9.1	-	8	46	s
Isle of Wight	X	-	8	46	s
Jersey	7.0	-	11	52	s
Kinloss	6.0	0.01	8	46	s
Leeds	7.3	0.11	8	46	s
Lerwick	0.5	0.01	5	41	sh
Leuchars	2.3	0.02	7	45	b
Littlehampton	9.2	-	9	48	s
London	3.5	-	8	46	b
Lowestoft	5.7	0.11	6	43	r
Manchester	6.0	0.05	8	46	sh
Margate	3.4	0.01	6	43	s
Morecambe	5.7	0.01	7	45	s
Newcastle	2.5	0.02	7	45	c
Newquay	9.1	-	8	46	b
Norwich	5.8	0.15	7	45	sl
Oxford	1.9	-	7	45	b
Penzance	9.0	-	10	50	s
Poole	6.0	0.01	9	48	s
Ross on Wye	1.4	0.01	7	45	b
Saunton Sands	1.8	-	7	45	s
Shrewsbury	6.1	0.11	8	46	s
Southend	3.8	-	7	45	c
Southsea	8.1	-	10	50	s
Stornoway	1.0	0.02	6	43	sh
Swanage	7.1	-	7	45	s
Teignmouth	5.3	-	7	45	s
Tenby	5.5	-	8	46	s

	C	F	
Ajaccio	20	68	s
Akrotiri	17	63	s
Alex'dria	18	64	s
Algiers	25	77	f
Amst'dm	4	39	d
Athens	17	63	s
Bahrain	25	77	s
Bangkok	35	95	s
Barbados	28	82	f
Barcelona	16	61	f
Beijing	3	37	s
Beirut	17	63	f
Belgrade	17	63	s
Berlin	8	46	c
Bermuda	14	57	f
Biarritz	30	68	s
Bordeaux	19	66	s
Brussels	7	45	c
Budapest	14	57	s
B Aires	26	79	s
Cairo	20	68	s
Cape Tn	34	93	s
Chicago	-1	30	f
Ch'church	17	63	X
Cologne	7	45	f
C'phagn	1	34	sl
Corfu	15	68	s
Dublin	5	41	r
Dubrovnik	13	55	s
Faro	18	64	s
Florence	14	57	c
Frankfurt	6	43	r
Funchal	19	66	s
Geneva	13	55	c
Gibraltar	17	63	f
Helsinki	-4	25	c
Hong K	21	70	c
Innsbruck	13	55	f
Istanbul	11	52	s
Jeddah	30	86	s
Jo'burg	28	82	s
L Palmas	22	72	s
Le Touqt	8	46	f
Lisbon	14	57	c
Locarno	7	45	c
L Angeles	11	52	r
Luxembg	6	43	r
Luxor	30	86	f
Madrid	15	59	s
Majorca	18	64	s
Malaga	16	61	s
Malta	16	61	s
Melbourne	19	66	c
Mexico C	22	72	s
Miami	23	73	s
Milan	9	48	c
Montreal	-5	23	s
Moscow	-6	21	s
Munich	14	57	s
Nairobi	X		
Naples	18	64	s
N Delhi	26	79	s
N York	1	34	f
Nice	15	59	s
Oslo	-4	25	c
Paris	8	46	c
Perth	30	86	s
Prague	6	43	r
Reykjavik	0	32	s
Rhodes	17	63	s
Rio de J	28	82	f
Riyadh	25	77	f
Rome	15	59	f
R'ndsway	7	45	c
Salzburg	14	57	s
S Frisco	9	48	s
Santiago	29	84	s
Seoul	7	45	c
Singapore	32	90	f
Stockholm	-3	27	c
Strasb'rg	8	46	c
Sydney	24	75	s
Tangier	19	66	f
Tel Aviv	17	63	f
Tenerife	21	70	d
Tokyo	7	45	f
Toronto	-4	25	f
Tunis	21	70	s
Vanc'ver	7	45	c
Venice	11	52	f
Vienna	13	55	f
Warsaw	3	37	c
Wash'ton	-3	27	s
Wellngton	20	68	X
Zurich	13	55	c

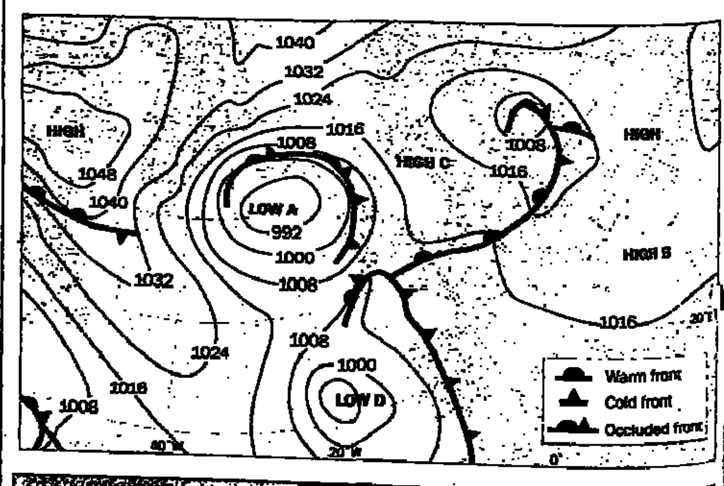
Temperatures at midday local time yesterday X = not available



WEATHER TODAY



Changes to the chart below from noon: low A will remain slow-moving, initially deepening, before starting to fill. High B will slowly build in situ. High C will build and drift southeast. Low D will drift east and fill



HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	7:29	3.3	20:18	3.2
Avonmouth	-	-	12:27	9.4
Belfast	5:08	2.8	17:46	2.8
Cardiff	-	-	12:13	8.9
Devonport	11:36	4.3	-	-
Dover	4:36	5.1	17:21	5.0
Dublin	5:58	3.2	18:54	3.2
Falmouth	11:07	4.1	23:46	4.1
Greenock	5:52	2.6	18:05	2.6
Harwich	5:10	3.0	17:42	2.9
Holyhead	4:12	4.3	16:57	4.1
Hull (Albert D)	-	-	12:08	6.9
Ilfracombe	11:39	6.5	-	-
King's Lynn	-	-	12:27	4.5
Leith	8:39	4.3	21:17	4.2

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Liverpool	4:51	7.1	17:30	6.9
London Bridge	7:30	5.7	19:54	5.7
Lowestoft	3:32	2.1	15:59	2.0
Margate	5:42	3.8	18:15	3.6
Milford Haven	-	-	12:01	4.9
Newquay	11:01	5.0	23:55	5.0
Oban	11:48	2.8	-	-
Penzance	10:33	4.0	23:30	4.1
Portland	11:41	1.2	-	-
Portsmouth	5:03	3.6	18:06	3.5
Shoreham	4:40	4.6	17:24	4.4
Southampton	4:44	-	-	3.5
Swansea	-	-	12:21	9.8
Tees	9:55	8.8	22:36	8.8
Walton-On-Naze	5:13	3.3	17:42	3.7

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

Yesterday: highest day max Lee-on-the-Solent, Hampshire, 11C (52F); lowest day max Redesdale, Northumberland, 5C (41F); most rainfall: Watnall, Nottinghamshire, 0.73in; most sunshine: Weymouth, Dorset, 9.7hr